



Shanthi Sandesh

Hindu Temple and Community Center Of Mid-Missouri
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Dr. S. Radhakrishnan on Indian Philosophy

H.R. Chandrasekhar

September 5 is celebrated in India as Teachers' Day. It was chosen to commemorate the birth day of Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan (1888 –1975), a philosopher, statesman and arguably one of the greatest teachers of India in the twentieth century. One of India's most influential scholars of comparative religion and philosophy, Radhakrishnan built a bridge between East and West by showing that the philosophical systems of each tradition is comprehensible within the terms of the other. His writings and speeches on India's religious and philosophical literature exuded authority and commanded reverence. Having been born, educated and taught in India prior to independence from the British colonial rule, he belonged to a rare breed of nationalists and internationalists. After gaining independence, the nation honored him with the highest office. He became the first Vice-President of India (1952–1962), and went on to

be the second President of India (1962–1967).

At a tender age of 30, Radhakrishnan was selected as Professor of Philosophy by the University of Mysore. By that time, he had written many articles for journals of repute like *The Quest*, *Journal of Philosophy* and the *International Journal of Ethics*. In 1921, he was appointed the King George V Chair of Mental and Moral Science at the University of Calcutta. Later he was invited to become the Spalding Professor of Eastern Religions and Ethics at Oxford University (1936–1952). Among the many honors he received were a knighthood (1931) and the Bharat Ratna (1954).

The first major work of Radhakrishnan was the book entitled *The Philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore*. He believed Tagore's philosophy to be the "genuine manifestation of the Indian spirit." Radhakrishnan's second book, *The Reign of Religion in Contemporary*

Philosophy was published in 1920. In his book "*Idealist View of Life*" he has made a powerful case for the importance of intuitive thinking as opposed to purely intellectual forms of thought. Radhakrishnan is best known for his commentaries on the Vedanta philosophy and the triad that comprise it (*Prasthanaya*) namely, the Bhagavad Gita, the Upanishads and the Brahma Sutra. Some of his other monumental writings are: *The Principal Upanishads* (1953) and *A Source Book in Indian Philosophy* (1957).

In this article I shall provide a glimpse of Radhakrishnan's writings, in particular, his thoughts on Yoga.

Radhakrishnan was a free thinker who had little use for dogma and religious hierarchy. "It is not God that is worshipped," he often said, "but the authority that claims to speak in His name. Sin becomes disobedience to authority - not violation of integrity."

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Executive Board Team wishes you all a very Happy, Healthy and Peaceful 2016! We would like to thank each and everyone for your help, participation and service at the Mandir and its activities over the past several years. Because of your support and service HTCC has successfully completed 10 years serving the community in Columbia.

HTCC will celebrate its 10th Anniversary with a Banquet

Message from the Executive Board

on Friday, March 11, 2016 at the Peachtree Banquet Center. Please attend this gala event with your friends & family to celebrate 10 years of HTCC's success. Meera Chandrasekhar is chairing the "10th Anniversary Banquet Committee" and has planned an evening of Delicious Food, great Music and Entertainment for you & your family. Please reserve your

seats for the 10th Anniversary Banquet by purchasing your tickets from Smruthi Senthil, Chandra Rawlani, Kusum Malhotra, Abirami Elangovan, Meera Chandrasekhar, Anantha Gopalaratnam, Inder Khurana, Das Kutikkad or any other officer of HTCC. To commemorate the 10th Anniversary celebration, Samarpanam 2016 will

(continued on Page 3)

Indian Philosophy Continued from page 1

On the topic of Yoga, which in the western world is associated more with calisthenics than its spiritual aspect, Radhakrishnan wrote in his *A Source Book in Indian Philosophy*:

"The ancient thinkers of India had a good working knowledge of what may be called the science of metaphysics, and were quite familiar with cryptesthesia and other kindred powers. They tell us that we can acquire the power of seeing and knowing without the help of the outer senses, and can become independent of the activity which we exercise through the physical senses and the brain. They assume that there is a wider world about us than we are normally able to apprehend. When some day our eyes open to it, we may have an extension of our perception as stupendous as a blind man has when he first acquires sight.

"By following the principles of the Yoga, such as heightening the power of concentration, arresting the vagaries of mind by fixing one's attention on the deepest sources of strength, one can master one's soul even as an athlete masters his body. The Yoga helps us to reach a higher level of consciousness, through a transformation of the psychic organism, which enables it to get beyond the limits set to ordinary human experience. We discern in the Yoga those cardinal conceptions of Hindu thought, such as the supremacy of the psychic over the physical, the exultation of silence and solitude, meditation and ecstasy, and the indifference to outer conditions, which make the traditional Hindu attitude to life appear so strange and fantastic to the modern mind. It is, however, conceded, by many who are acquainted with it, that it is a necessary corrective to our present mentality, overburdened with external things and estranged from the true life of spirit by humdrum toil, material greed and sensual excitement.

The word Yoga literally means "yoking" or "union." Here we are talking of the union of the soul of individual (Jivatman) with the Universal soul (paramatman). Radhakrishnan wrote: "In the Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita, the soul in its worldly and sinful condition is said to live

separate and estranged from the supreme soul. The root of all sin and suffering is separation, disunion, estrangement. To be rid of sorrow and sin, we must attain spiritual unification, the consciousness of two in one.

The treatise *Yogasutra* by Patanjali, on the other hand, has a different take on this matter. Radhakrishnan writes: "In Patanjali, Yoga does not mean union, but only effort, or, as Bhoja says, separation (viyoga) between *purusa* and *prakrti*. It is the search for what Novalis called "Our transcendental me," the divine and eternal part of our being. It also signifies exertion, strenuous endeavor, and so come to be used for the system of the restraint of the senses and the mind. Though it is sometimes used as a synonym for the end of *samadhi*, it is more often employed to indicate the way of reaching it. Passages are not wanting where it signifies the supreme power possessed by God. Yoga, according to Patanjali, is a methodical effort to attain perfection, through the control of the different elements of human nature, physical and psychical. The physical body, the active will and the understanding mind are to be brought under control. Patanjali insists on certain practices which are intended to cure the body of its restlessness and free it from impurities. When we secure through these practices increased vitality, prolonged youth and longevity, these are to be employed in the interests of spiritual freedom. The other methods are employed to purify and tranquillise *citta* (*mind*). The main interest of Patanjali is not metaphysical theorizing, but the practical motive of indicating how salvation can be attained by disciplined activity.

With Bhagavad Gita in his mind, Radhakrishnan says: "The reality of the self is to be found not by means of an objective use of the mind, but by a suppression of its activities and penetration beneath the mental strata with which our ordinary life and activity conceal our diviner nature. Though the seed of spirit is present in each one of us, it is not realized by our consciousness, which is too busily engaged with other things. We must undergo a severe discipline before we can achieve

the redirection of our consciousness. The Yoga philosophy urges that the necessary inhibition of mental states is brought about by practice and conquest of desire. While the latter is the result of a life of virtue, the former refers to the effort towards steadiness, of thought, which is gained by purificatory action, continence, knowledge and faith. *Vairagya* or Passionlessness is the consciousness of mastery possessed by one who has rid himself of thirst for either seen or revealed objects. Such a one is supremely indifferent to the pleasures of heaven or of earth. In the highest form of *Vairagya*, where the discernment of the self arises, there is no danger of any subjection to the desire for objects or their qualities. This leads to ultimate freedom, while the lower form of *Vairagya*, which has a trace of *Rajas* (and so *Pravrtti*) in it, results in the condition of absorption in *Prakrti* (*Prakrtilaya*).

"In the human organism we find the physical body, the vital dynamism, the psychic principles, in addition to the *Purusa*. The *Purusa*, is hidden behind veils of corruptible flesh and restless mind, all of which offer hindrances to the method of Yoga. The close connection of body and mind is insisted on, for pain, despondency, unsteadiness of the body, and inspiration and expiration are the accompaniments of distractions. Though physical health is not the end of human life, it is still one of its essential conditions. We cannot look upon man as a physical machine to which spiritual life is attached from outside. The body is the instrument for the expression of spiritual problem. To overcome the hindrances, the Yoga gives us the eightfold method, consisting of *Yama* (abstention), *Niyama* (observance), *Asana* (posture), *Pranayama* (regulation of breath), *Pratyahara* (withdrawal of the senses), *Dhyana* (fixed attention), *Dharana* (contemplation), and *Samadhi* (concentration). The last three are direct or internal (*antaranga*) aids, while the first five are indirect or external (*bahiranga*)."



Poem - I Am

Tarun Bathini - 7th Grade, Thomas Jefferson Middle School

*I am inquisitive and compassionate.
I wonder how the poor people go through their lives every day.
I hear their cries for a better life.
I see them begging on the streets, pleading for money.
I want them to be happy and not worry about money.
I am inquisitive and compassionate.*

*I pretend not to see them.
I feel their pain.
I touch their faces full of sorrow.
I worry if they will ever feel better about their lives.
I cry when I think deeply about them.
I am inquisitive and compassionate.*

*I understand that we all can't help them all the time.
I say help them when you get the chance.
I dream of them not going through a day of torture.
I hope that one day the poor will not have to worry about food or money.
I am inquisitive and compassionate.*

Executive Board

Continued from page 1

feature several pages of highlights of HTCC's activities, events and achievements over the past ten years. We would like to encourage you to be a part of this keepsake volume of Samarpanam with a personal message featuring successful events in your own family viz.: Graduation, Wedding, Anniversary, Newborn and more. Please contact Inder Khurana, Abirami Elangovan or any officer of HTCC to reserve a place for your family's personal message in Samarpanam2016.

HTCC's devotional programs Committee has a special treat for you as it prepares to celebrate 10th Anniversary Devotional Program on Saturday, April 23, 2016. Stay tuned to learn more about it.

In March 2016, it is time for elections. Upon receiving a call for nominations, please nominate eligible members for the position of President and Secretary of HTCC's Executive Board and also for two positions of elected trustees to represent members on the HTCC's Board of Trustees (BoT). Please watch your emails for nominations and ballots. We ask that you actively participate in the nomination and election processes to nominate/vote the most eligible candidates for these positions. HTCC can surely use new, motivated and committed members and officers to take it to the next level.

Here's a recap of activities since last edition of Shanthi Sandesh. Fourth quarter of 2015 was very festive like the fourth quarter always is each year. We celebrated Diwali on November 11th with fireworks and lots of sweets after "Laxmi Puja" at the Mandir. Adults and children enthusiastically participated, in the traditional manner, by burning sparklers in the Mandir Parking Lot. Even though it was very windy everyone had a great time.

HTCC's Service Programs Committee along with Bal Sabha and Bal Puja youth organized the annual service project "Sharing the Warmth" during the week of November 11th. Columbia Sathya Sai Group also collected gently used iPods, new iPod shuffle, music from 40s to 80s and iTunes gift cards over the weeks from October 1st thru November 15 to benefit MU Adult Day connection. We are very proud of our youth and service programs committee for undertaking such worthwhile projects in the community. "Sri Hari Gita" recitation, an annual event, was held on Saturday, December 5th and was very well attended. Dhanurmasam was celebrated on December 19th with chanting of "Thirupaavai" followed by music, bhajans and discussion. This was also the last event of 2015.

We welcomed year 2016 on January 1st by chanting "Gyantri Mantra" 108 times. The positive vibrations created by

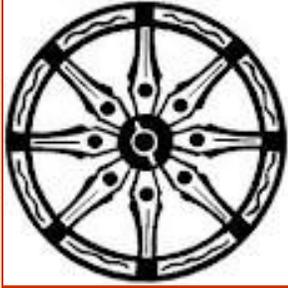
chanting the mantras gave everyone present a very uplifting feeling. May the New Year bring you and your family eternal Peace and Prosperity! Kudos to Sathvik Kannan, a pre-teenage youth, who helped HTCC's devotional committee by setting and preparing "HTCC's 2016 Calendar" copies of which are available at the Mandir. Saathvik we are proud of you!

As you may notice, HTCC's devotional programs committee and Service Projects committee are busy thru out the year bringing you a variety of programs. We encourage you to join one of the several HTCC committees. You can really make a difference in the community with your talents and enthusiasm. You will find that service can be most rewarding resulting in great personal satisfaction. In the process you will also become a good role model for your children who will also greatly benefit by the service culture. Please talk to EB officers to get more information about the committees that interest you. See you at the Mandir ☺

*Ravi Thawani
Kirtadas Kutikkad
Kusum Malhotra
Abirami Elangovan*

"Man learns through experience, and the spiritual path is full of different kinds of experiences. He will encounter many difficulties and obstacles, and they are the very experiences he needs to encourage and complete the cleansing process".

Sai Baba



Childhood Obesity

Anya Kumar - 8th Grade, Gentry Middle School

Approximately one out of three kids in the United States are obese. Childhood obesity is when a child or adolescent is over weight for his or her age/height. With so many children in the U.S. overweight, it is important for people to understand and help prevent childhood obesity. There are many misconceptions about childhood obesity. People also should understand that childhood obesity isn't easy on anyone, especially not the child. Though there are treatments for childhood obesity many of them are hazardous. A better way to reduce childhood obesity in our nation is to prevent it in the first place. Studies have shown that an adult head of household who has been to college is less likely to have an obese child than an adult head of household who didn't finish high school. Also, schools can help prevent childhood obesity too.

There are plenty of misconceptions about childhood obesity. For example, many people think that the children are weak-willed and self-indulgent, and that is why they become obese. This is not always true. In many cases, healthy food is not easily accessible. Obesity is very common amongst low-income families because families that have low-income rates don't have enough money to buy healthy foods. Sometimes, children are given too much to eat and force themselves to eat it all. In other cases, genetics are the cause for obesity. Many parents tell their pediatricians that everyone in the family is 'big-boned' and that makes it okay for their child to be large. If everyone in the family is large, it is still not okay for the child not to try to change his or her habits to become healthier. Childhood obesity can take a very large emotional toll on a child. It is important that as an adolescent, children are confident and comfortable in their own skin. If they aren't, the emotional damage can be just as bad as the physical damage. Overweight children often have low self-esteem and turn to food to comfort. Many try to seek treatments after seeing advertisements, which claim to help, but are actually hazardous.

There are treatments for childhood obesity and there are also many risk factors. Diseases often accompany obesity the most common of which are heart disease and arthritis. Preventing obesity in the first place is the best solution to decreasing the amount of overweight children in the U.S. One way that seemingly reduces the chance of a child being obese, is if the adult head of household has gone to college. Nine percent of girls who are overweight have an adult head of household that went to college. Nineteen percent of girls who are overweight have an adult head of household who did not finish high school. That is a ten percent difference! The same is shown with boys. Eleven percent of boys have an adult head of household who went to college and twenty one percent have an adult head of household who didn't finish high school.

Not only does the education level of the adult head of household affect the likelihood of a child being obese. Schools make a large impact as well. In order for schools to help prevent childhood obesity, schools should provide healthy meal programs for students. They should also provide employee wellness programs so, that the staff can be good role models for students. Schools should also provide students with at least sixty minutes of physical education daily. All schools need to provide physical activity, health classes, and counseling. All of this will help students form good habits and prevent childhood obesity.

In conclusion, childhood obesity is tough to get through. Children may not always be at fault for being obese, but they need to put in an effort to become better. Being overweight causes much insecurity as well as many medical problems. Treatments can be found, but there are risk factors. Preventing childhood obesity in the first place, will help to decrease the number of overweight children in the United States. A child with an adult head of household who has been to college is half as likely to be obese as a child with an adult head of household who didn't finish high school. It is also helpful for schools to provide programs that help children form good habits. Overall, people need to try to prevent childhood obesity ☺

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Bal Sandesh

Newsletter of Bal Sabha of Columbia, MO

February 2016

Bal Sabha Officers

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Bal Sandesh wishes everyone a Happy Valentine's Day, Presidents Day, and an early spring (assuming the groundhog's prediction holds true)...and belated wishes for Pongal festival and India's 67th Republic Day which were celebrated here in Columbia, Missouri with the usual grandeur and fun/festivity.

Congratulations to the Bal Sabha kids for their wonderful performances in the 1st MU India Day/Republic Day celebrations. That was an awesome performance!

A big applause to all the Bal Sabha kids who participated in the Spelling Bee, Geography Bee, Math contest, and Science Olympiad competitions! Wishing good luck to those in Science Olympiad and the Spelling Bee for their upcoming regional competitions.

In this issue we have a few articles, a poem and a write-up on Bal Sabha and Pongal. Keep sending the write-ups, poems, jokes, book reviews and more as it makes the newsletter interesting and more fun to read! **The Editors**

Science Olympiad Invitational

Vishnu Arunachalam - 7th Grade, Gentry Middle School

Science Olympiad is a national non-profit organization devoted to improving the quality of K-12 science education, and schools all over the country participate in it. There are many levels of competition, such as Regionals, State, and Nationals. If you are lucky, you might get invited to (an) invitational(s) to gain experience, suggestions, and confidence. One such invitational was the WMS invitational. There were 18 schools there, including one from St. Louis that won third place in State last year. Most of the Columbia Public Middle Schools were there.

There are many different events that one can compete in Science Olympiad. The events I did were Mission Possible (build a Rube Goldberg machine with as many simple machines as possible, and to ring a bell at the end), Scrambler (build a car that will go as fast and as close as it will go to the barrier without

breaking an egg at the front of the car) and Fossils (as the name suggests, you have to study fossils). For mission possible, my partner and I built our contraption out of Legos. The judge for it had to watch the video he took of the contraption running in slow motion on his iPad to see if we actually did it right. For scrambler, my partner and I built it out of wood and hot glue. For fossils, I didn't study much, but nearing the invitational date, I finally did.

The award ceremony came along very quickly, and we were all nervous. We took our seats. The announcer announced all the events. It turned out that I placed in all my events. Third in Fossils, third in scrambler, and first in Mission Possible. I felt great. I was very much looking forward to Regionals!

Pongal/Sankranti

Charunetha Murugesan - 6th Grade, Gentry Middle School



Pongal is a harvest festival that is celebrated in India. This festival is honoring the Sun God Surya, God of Rain Indra and worship of the cattle. This is one of the most important festivals celebrated in

Tamil Nadu, a state in south India. Pongal festival lasts for four days. This festival also known as Makara Sankranti in other parts of India.

Our Indian community in Columbia celebrated Pongal in the Mark Taiwan hall. The program started with the lamp lighting, a formal inauguration of the function which was performed by Meenakshi Sivaraman. The introduction song was sung by me and my friends. We sang Probo Ganapathay and a song about God Muruga. The next performance was the flower blossom

dance by the little girls on a song called pookale and it was a colorful performance. Then the Tamil class students sang bharadhiyar song called Om shakthi. It was a nice traditional twist to the evening. Next was a dance performed by me and my friends where we danced to the song malarkal ketten. It was an enthralling performance. After that there were two Bharatanatyam dance performances which were a delight to watch. The boys performed the Lungi dance and it was very nice to watch and the audience too loved it. Then parents then performed a skit in a story-like manner to convey the message about the Chennai flood devastation and also shared many interesting facts about Chennai. Last but not least, we had a wonderful potluck feast that featured many traditional foods from southern India. The Pongal celebrations were an incredible event to watch and I was glad to be a part of it!

Bal Sabha is Fun

Aneesh Calyam - 1st Grade, Mill Creek Elementary

In Bal Sabha, all the kids assemble and start learning with "slokas" or prayers. We recite slokas on "Guru" (teacher) and pay attention to all the good things being discussed. The Guru asks for the names of the kids and we sing to any kid with a birthday that month.

We learn about Hindu gods, India country's fun facts and even other countries in the world. Anyone can share what they know about the topic with the class. There were times when other kids made a PowerPoint presentation, asked trivia questions and gave candy to kids who gave the right answers. Once, we learned about "Hanuman's Adventures" and did an activity where we tried to jump as far and high as Hanuman! We also learned about Birbal/Akbar, Bal Ganesh and even Krishna!!

My Guru teaches things that he thinks kids need to know about people, moral stories or 'subhashitas' that mean 'wise sayings'.

At the end of the Bal Sabha class, I get to play with all my friends. We all eat a yummy and healthy snack because we feel hungry after the class and playing.

It was fun when we Bal Sabha kids got to learn the Indian songs, "Vande Maataram" and "Saare Jahan se Accha" and sang them at the India Republic Day function at the University of Missouri. We also sang the Indian and American national anthems, "Jana Gana Mana" and "Star Spangled Banner".

I can't wait to go to the next Bal Sabha where we will talk about Mahatma Gandhi! ☺

Science Olympiad Regional

Vignesh Kumar - 7th Grade, Gentry Middle School

My heart was pounding against my chest. I could feel the sweat dripping down my forehead, drop by drop. Why I had gotten into this nerve-racking experience was what puzzled me even more than the test questions I had taken a few hours ago. I could hear the judge utter the words that would lead to my inevitable doom: "Gentry Middle School, could you please come to the testing zone?" Even though it was a question, somehow, I knew it was a command. Reluctantly, I stepped down the stairs into the testing zone.

This was exactly how I wanted to spend my Saturday: taking a bunch of tests early in the morning in Rolla, Missouri where the temperature is less than 25 degrees. At the moment, I was about to test my ball launcher in "Air Trajectory," one of many events in Science Olympiad. I had spent multiple hours building and testing my model (much of it included turning my ball launcher into a confetti cannon). With all of the efforts from my partner and me, we couldn't accept defeat. The past few weeks had all built up to this moment. I heard the dreaded word slip from the judge's mouth: "Your time starts now."

My partner and I had eight minutes to do all of our testing. No more, no less. It was the shortest eight minutes of my life. Time seemed to disappear. Each minute felt like a second. We immediately began working. Frantically looking over our checklist, making sure the ball was loaded inside the machine, and checking the degree of the aiming mechanism were all key factors in our success. Before we knew it, time was up. My partner and I had completed our 4 trials successfully. Mission accomplished. We had participated by the rules and managed to have a little bit of fun. That was all that mattered.

Aside from Air Trajectory, I had participated in two other events. They were equally fun but their results do not matter to me. Only my participation does. I was satisfied with my performance. There was some good news though, my efforts did not go in vain. My school had qualified for the state competition in April! I was happy for about two seconds until I realized that I would have to repeat the same procedure. Although my happiness dampened a little, I always find a way to have fun along the journey ☺

Bal Sandesh needs you!

We welcome submissions of all types (reports, poetry, short stories, artwork, puzzles, jokes etc.). Work can be submitted to the Editors or the Parent Advisor. We prefer electronic version of the submission (e-mail or diskette). Artwork can be submitted on paper. Older kids interested in volunteering to serve on the editorial team should contact the Editorial Staff or the Parent Advisor.



<i>Bal Sabha meets every fourth Sunday of the month from 3:00 - 5:00 p.m. at Shanthi Mandir</i>	<i>Editorial Staff</i>	<i>Phone</i>	<i>E-Mail</i>
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The Golden Retriever

Meena Cullity Younger - 5th Grade, Mill Creek Elementary

Are you looking for a good dog for your family? Well, I'd like to tell you about one that I know a little bit about. I have a Golden Retriever named Duffy. He is one and a half years old. Golden Retrievers are retrievers – that means they bring things back, like sticks and balls, but they are also used as hunting dogs to bring back things such as ducks that have been shot down.

They are from Scotland originally. The first breeder's name sounds kind of funny. His name was Lord TweedMouth and he lived in the 1800s. Golden Retrievers are a cross between an English Water Spaniel and a wavy-coated retriever. They were bred to have soft mouths for hunting, especially back then.

They are among the four most intelligent dog breeds. Golden Retrievers have a waterproof coat that is very thick and they shed twice a year. They are extremely friendly so they do not make good guard dogs. They live between eleven and fifteen years, or about ninety-one years in dog years!

They love to play and love walks so it is important that your family be able to take the time for them. I hope this little essay will be useful to anyone considering a new dog.

Thank you for reading!

Poem – Om Namah Shivaye

Ranjana Sharma



*Mighty mystic Himalayas,
a great revered Shivalaya.
Lord Shiva's holy grace,
flows as rivers all over the space.
Rhythm of Lord Shiva's drum,
every valley sweetly hums.
Lord's name engraved as "OM",
sanctifies agni, jal, vayu and vyom.
Tandav, when Nataraj performs,
whole universe reforms.
You control the tides - high or low,
Oh! Lord Shiva to thee I bow.*

"Om Namah Shivayae" -The holy mantra of Lord Shiva.

"Shivalaya"– Temple of Lord Shiva .

*"Agni" – Fire, "Jal" – Water,
"Vayu" – Air, "Vyom" – Space*

"Tandav"- Mythical dance performed by Lord Shiva that can destroy the universe.

"Nataraj" – Another name of Lord Shiva, when he performs Tandav.

Bal Sabha Kudos



Gentry School Spelling Bee:
Winner- Tia Rawat; Runner up
Aparna Sivaraman

Congratulations to the Bal Sabha kids for all their accomplishments in this past quarter. Here is a list:

Spelling Bee: Tia Rawat won the Gentry school spelling bee and Abi was the runner up. The two had 10-12 nerve racking rounds before a winner could finally be decided. Tia goes on to represent Gentry at the Columbia Tribune Regional Spelling Bee in March with Abi as the alternate.

Kartikeya was the runner up in the Mill Creek school Spelling Bee. Great accomplishment!

Math: Sriya qualified for MCTM Math Regionals. Way to go!

Shruti (Gentry) also qualified for the state championship and placed 7th position overall in the MCTM Regionals. Gentry stood first in the MCTM Regionals. Shruti's Math team (Gentry) also took the 1st spot at Math Counts and qualified for the State meet. Way to go girls!

Geography Bee: Vishnu and Rohan Rao made it to the top 10 at Gentry Middle school

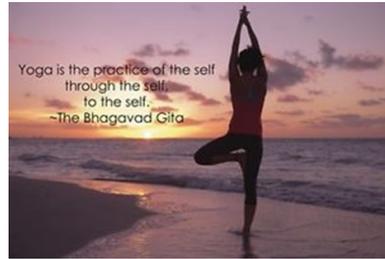
Science Olympiad: Vishnu, Vignesh, Anusha and Nirandra made it to Gentry team for Invitational (3rd) and Regionals (2nd place). We wish them good luck for the Regionals next month. Congratulations also to Akhil (Jeff Junior), Ajay (West Middle) and Aswath, Pranav from Rock Bridge for their Science Olympiad accomplishments.

Chess: Aparna Sivaraman won several games and was among the top 10 in the 2016 Columbia Elementary and Middle School Scholastic Chess tournament

Yoga Corner

Ritcha Mehra Chaudhary

This time In “Yoga Corner” we will look at the asana called “Vraksha” asana.



The main challenge of the *tree pose* is to maintain balance while standing on one leg. Regular practice of this posture will help focus the mind and improve balance and concentration (*dharana*).

1. Stand with the feet together and the arms by your sides.
2. Bend the right leg at the knee, raise the right thigh and bring the sole of the right foot as high up the inside of the left thigh as possible.
3. Balancing on the left foot, raise both arms over the head keeping the elbows unbent and joining the palms together.
4. Hold the posture while breathing gently through the nostrils for about 10 complete breaths.
5. Lower the arms and right leg and return to the standing position with feet together and arms at the sides.
6. Pause for a few moments and repeat on the opposite leg.

Duration:

Hold the *vriksha-asana* as long as you comfortably can.

Tips for Beginners:

The beginners may find it difficult to bring the foot high inside the right thigh.

1. You can bring the foot lower on the leg but do not put it directly on the knee.
2. You can also initially practice by holding a wall for balance.
3. To aid your balance keep your eyes open and fix your gaze on a point directly in front of you.

Caution:

1. Avoid this pose if you suffer from migraine, insomnia, low or high blood pressure.
2. Those people with high blood pressure may do this asana, however, avoid raising your hands overhead for too long, as this may further increase your blood pressure. In such cases, place your hands on your chest.

Benefits:

1. This asana stretches the legs, thighs, ankles and the feet. It strengthens leg muscles and the tendons and the ligaments of the feet. It also strengthens the knee and loosens the hip joints.
2. It provides a stretch to the spine.
3. It strengthens the arms and the shoulders.
4. It helps improve balance, equilibrium and concentration.
5. This posture has been found to relieve some cases of sciatica.



Photo Gallery



New Year Celebration

Education without character, commerce without morality, politics without principles, science without humanity, religion without love, administration without justice, knowledge without application, patriotism without sacrifice, are not only useless but positively dangerous.

Sri Satya Sai Baba

Shreemad Bhagavad Gita – Part 28

Saroj Mohan

The one who worships the whole existence as me, as Vasudeva or the indwelling Lord, such a great man is very rare." We learned in the 19th verse that the devotee who is a *Gyani* is one who knows that the only Reality is the inner self.

Shri Krishna, in fact is trying to explain that at different states of human evolution, people attain different states of understanding of the Reality, by different paths of spiritual practices, the final coveted state being total dissolution of the ego and ignorance. There is no reason to despair for the seekers of the truth in early stages after many lifetimes of *Sadhana*, such a great man of perfection is born and it is rare to find him.

In the 20th and 21st verses Shri Krishna makes it clear that as stated before people have different dispositions, according to their nature or *Gunas*. They worship different Gods for the fulfillment of their desires. In all that different god-heads the One-ness of the Self is the same Non-dual Reality.

Shri Krishna says, "The people whose hearts have been stolen by their desires, who due to their nature worship different Gods with faith and devotion, I increase their faith and stability in those Gods and fulfill their desires through those Gods or Devas".

According to their temperament and nature, whosoever in whichever way worships the idol of his heart, Shri Krishna increases their stability and faith in those Devas and fulfills their desires through that Deva. For instance, like someone who has a lot of devotion and love for *Hanumanji*, the divine will increase his devotion and faith in him,

Shri Krishna, in the 22nd verse, makes it clear that even though the *Saadhaka* or the seeker with desires, full of faith, worships different Gods, but in fact I am the one who dispenses fulfillment of his desires through them.

The Lord says, "The seekers who worship the different Gods with full faith and devotion, I fulfill their desires through those Devas only. He gets the fruits of his actions without any doubt, dispensed by Me only."

It is the Self that is the source of all actions and fulfillments. Shri Krishna is the eternal Infinite Consciousness, the substratum on which this illusion of duality is superimposed by ego and ignorance. Everything happens in the field of Supreme Consciousness. It may seem like that a particular Deva is giving the fruits of the actions but in reality it is the Self, which dispenses it all.

Part 28 in this series by Saroj Mohanji on *Shreemad Bhagavad Gita* includes discussions from the 20th - 27th verses of Chapter 7



In the 23rd verse it is made clear that egocentric, worldly people desire transient objects of sense gratification. The *Nishkama* devotee or the devotee with no desires for perishable objects of the dual world, desire nothing, but strive for self-realization - only the *Paramatma*.

Shri Krishna says, "The fruits of the actions performed by unintelligent egocentric people are transient and finite. Those who worship the Devas attain the Devas but those who worship me - my devotees come to Me."

The unintelligent seekers of worldly enjoyments with transient objects of pleasure remain in the cycle of finite joys and sorrows. They remain stuck in the domain of duality. On the other hand, seekers with discrimination of real and unreal, strive for the eternal abode of bliss and peace - the Self.

The Lord says, in the 24th verse, that *Mandabudhayh* or men with very little intelligence, do not know my eternal, immutable Self.

Shri Krishna says, "The men with no intelligence, do not know my immutable, eternal and peerless nature. They think of me, my manifestation, as an ordinary human being. Not knowing my eternal *Satchidananda* manifestation of the Lord, *Abudhdhaya* or men without any intelligence think of Him as an ordinary human being. These men are unable to comprehend the Divine Reality. They do not know what is real and what is unreal. This

happens due to a lack of the power of discrimination. Deluded by the *Prakriti*, duality is the only reality to them. The man of wisdom understands the Truth.

In the 25th verse Shri Krishna makes it clear why such a thing happens.

Shri Krishna says, "*Mayaya aavritam* or veiled by my own Maya, I am not perceptible to ignorant men. They do not know my real nature as the unborn, eternal, immortal and imperishable. They think of Me as mortal, mired in the cycle of birth and death."

It is clear that the *Moodha Lokah* or ignorant people, stuck in the mire of delusion, do not see the immortal nature of the Lord, and think of Him as mortal, in the cycle of birth and death, perishable as themselves. They cannot comprehend the Reality, due to their darkness of ignorance or *Avidaya Maya*, are totally deluded by their own nature.

In the 26th verse Shri Krishna declares His omniscient nature, knowing all, past, present and future.

Shri Krishna says, "O Arjuna, I know whatever has happened in the past, the present, and the future. I know it all but no one who is without faith and devotion knows Me."

The Self or the Lord is the Infinite pure Consciousness that illumines all, past, present and future, body, mind and intellect, objects, emotions and thoughts. This is the Omniscient and Omnipresent nature of the Lord. Our beloved Lord Krishna knows everything, at all the times. The Self is the substratum on which this superimposed duality feels like it is real, but in fact the Self-effulgent Lord illumines it all. Everything exists in the pure awareness only.

Shri Krishna asks, in the 27th verse, what the reason is due to which the Lord remains unknown to worldly people. What is it that veils their vision?

Shri Krishna says, "*O Bharatvanshi Arjuna*, in this world due to desires and pairs of opposites like joy and sorrow, good and bad, attachments and aversions, people stay deluded. *O Paramtapa Arjuna* or the destroyer of foes, due to their ignorance of the Reality, they remain totally deluded."

It is clear that due to desires and attachments in all the fields of life, body, mind, intellect, in the traps of dualities and pairs of opposites like joy and sorrow etc., worldly people remain deluded by them. They cannot see the Lord, the Self ☺

I will manifest Myself in every millennium for the uplift of the good and virtuous, destruction of the evil, and for the re-establishment of righteousness and the natural law.

Sri Krishna, Shreemad Bhagavad Gita - Chap 4, Verse 8

HTCC Quarterly Fiscal Report

For the period October 1st, 2015 - December 31st, 2015
Prepared by Abirami Elangovan, Treasurer, February 10th, 2016

Quarterly Revenues

Interest Income		
Interest income	\$159.27	\$159.27
Membership:		
Annual Family membership	\$300.00	\$330.00
Annual Individual Membership	\$30.00	
Donations:		
Check Donations/Special Events	\$1,454.25	\$4,547.25
Hundi Donations/Prayer Services	\$359.00	
Capital Campaign	\$2,734.00	
Facilities Use Donations:		
Mandir and Educational Center use donations	\$281.00	\$281.00
Total Quarterly Revenues		\$5,317.52

Quarterly Expenses

Bank Charges	\$17.40	
Insurance	\$1887.00	
Lawn and Garden	\$120.00	
Special Events	\$251.00	
Sponsorships	\$100.00	
Utilities	\$1,064.70	
Total Quarterly Expenses		\$3,440.10
Net Income for the Quarter		\$1,877.42



Thank You!

Donor Acknowledgement October, 2015– December, 2015

We gratefully acknowledge the following donations made during the above period. If we have inadvertently made an error in not including your name, please let us know.



Upto \$50

Gopalakrishna, Srinath and Uma

\$51 - \$100

Cutkosky, Dale and Hema Srinivasan

\$101- \$150

Malhotra, Anil and Kusum
 Pandurangi, Raghu and Sandhya
 Ratneshwar, Srinivasan and Subbalakshmi

\$151 - \$499

Sehgal Santosh
 Khurana, Inder and Jasmit
 Aggarwal, Kul and Archana
 Loyalka, Sudharshan and Nirja
 Gopalaratnam, Vellore and Anantha

\$1500 and up

Mantrala, Murali and Surya

Parents interested in teaching their kids Hindi please contact

Sumit Gupta
 (573)823-7398

Please donate generously for HTCC
 Capital Campaign



Community Calendar (February 15, 2015 – April 30, 2016)

Unless otherwise indicated, all events are at Shanthi Mandir, 2006 Holly Avenue, Columbia, MO 65202.

March 5th

Shivaratri

Time: 06:30 p.m.

Contact: Uma Srinath: (573)446-8403

March 24th

Holi Celebration

Time: 01:00 p.m.- 04:00 p.m.

Contact: Chandra Rawlani : (573)864-5521 and
Gagneesh Rawat: (573)808-3491

April 9th-10th

Akhand Ramayan

Time: 10:30 a.m. (04/06/16)-

12:00 p.m. on 04/10/16

Contact: Chandra Rawlani : (573)864-5521

April 24th

HTCC 10th Anniversary Devotional Program

Time: 10:30 a.m.– 12:00 p.m.

Contact: Chandra Rawlani : (573)864-5521 and
Hema Srinivasan : (573)289-8797

***More details will be posted on the Shanthi Mandir website
(<http://shanthimandir.missouri.org>) a week before the scheduled event)*

HTCC 10th Anniversary Celebrations

Date: March 11, 2016

Venue: Peach Tree Banquet Hall

Time: 06:00 p.m. - 09:00 p.m.



Please reserve your seats for the 10th Anniversary Banquet by purchasing your tickets from Smruthi Senthil, Chandra Rawlani, Kusum Malhotra, Abirami Elangovan, Meera Chandrasekhar, Anantha Gopalaratnam, In-der Khurana , Das Kutikkad or any other officer of HTCC.

Shanthi Mandir

Hindu Temple and Community Center of Mid-Missouri (HTCC)

2006 Holly Avenue, Columbia, MO 65202-2043

HTCC is registered as a Nonprofit Corporation in MO

HTCC is tax-exempt under IRS Section 501 (c) 3

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Current Programs at the Mandir

(February 15, 2016)

Devotional Programs

Open prayer time/Aarti		Tuesday	6:00 - 8:00 p.m.
Geeta Study Circle		Tuesday	7:00 - 7:30 p.m.
Sai Bhajan		Thursday	7:00 - 8:00 p.m.
Venkateshwara Suprabhatam/Vishnu Sahasranaamam		Saturday	9:00 - 10:00 a.m.
Open prayer time/Aarti		Saturday	6:00 - 8:00 p.m.
Kirtan (Monthly event)	1 st	Sunday	10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Educational/Youth Programs

Tamil Classes	1 st /3 rd	Sunday	3:00 - 5:00 p.m.
Bal Puja	3 rd	Sunday	2:00 - 3:00 p.m.
Bal Sabha	4 th	Sunday	3:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Service Programs

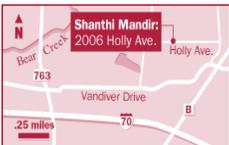
Volunteering at Central Missouri Food Bank	1 st	Tuesday	5:30 - 6:30 p.m.
Narayan Seva (Sai Group - St. Francis Home Lunch)	2 nd	Sunday	11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Non-Perishable Food Collection (Ongoing continuously)			
Soup and Sandwich Service	4 th	Sunday	5:30 - 7:00 p.m.

Fitness and Cultural Art Programs

Tabla classes (instructor fee required)		Sunday	Flexible for now
Carnatic vocal music classes (instructor fee required)		Sunday	1:00 - 3:00 p.m.
Yoga classes (instructor fees required)		Saturday	Flexible for now



Shanthi Sandesh is a quarterly publication of the Hindu Temple and Community Center of Mid-Missouri (HTCC). It is published on behalf of HTCC by its Publications Committee. Editor: Tarang Parashar <tarangparashar@gmail.com>.



Directions: Take Exit 127 on Interstate 70, Head north on Rangeline Street, Right at first traffic light on Vandiver Drive, Left on Parker Street, Right on Holly Avenue, Shanthi Mandir sign will be visible on the right after 5-6 homes. (Note: Holly Avenue is immediately before the Sunrise Optimist building).

Please visit our web site and send us your e-mail address if you would like to be included on the **Friends of the Mandir** distribution list to receive timely program notices.

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