



Shanthi Sandesh

Hindu Temple and Community Center Of Mid-Missouri
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VOLUME 12, ISSUE 1

JANUARY 2017

Message from the Executive Board

Wish you all a very Happy, Healthy and Peaceful New Year!

As we start the new year, let's take some time to reflect on our activities in the past year and also on the growth we have experienced in HTCC and also as a community over the past 11 years. Let's also take a moment to visualize the future progress of HTCC and our wonderful community in the mid Missouri area.

In 2016, HTCC celebrated the 10th Annual Anniversary Banquet on Friday, March 11, 2016 at the Peachtree Banquet Center. Meera Chandrasekhar chaired the "Anniversary Banquet Committee" this year and did an excellent job of putting together a fun filled program. It was an evening of celebration with Good Food, Music and Fun for all the attendees. Net revenue after expenses was over \$7,800. Thanks to all the members/ volunteers who helped to make the 10th year anniversary banquet a memorable event.

In the BoT message in "Samarpanam2016" that was released on March 11, 2016 at the 10th Anniversary Banquet, Dr. H.R. Chandrasekhar reminds us how Swami Vivekananda delivered his message of universal love and harmony on September 11, 1893 at the World parliament of Religions held in Chicago, IL. That message is often said to be a key point of the bridging of Eastern and Western Spirituality, and the coming of Vedanta and Yoga to the west. During this holiday season let's embrace Swami Vivekananda's message and pray that everyone live in Peace and Harmony always.

Election committee consisting of Gagneesh Rawat, Krishna Sharma and Srinath Gopalakrishna conducted the electronic ballots via Survey Monkey for the election of EB officers and elected trustee of BoT. Ravi Thawani was elected as President of HTCC Executive Board, Kusum Malhotra was elected as Secretary of HTCC Executive Board, Annayya Rao Aror and Kala Kumar were elected as Elected Trustee of HTCC Board of Trustees. All positions were uncontested this year. Total of 75 votes were cast for each position in the 2016 annual election. Congratulations to all the winners of this year's elections. Each one of the officers elected will serve for a term of two (2) years.

Major festivals/events celebrated at the Mandir in 2016 were Maha Shivratri (03/05), Akhand

Ramayan (04/08 & 04/09), HOLI with colors (04/10), Annual Devotional Program (04/23), Janamashtmi (08/27), Ganesh Sthaapna & Chaturthi Puja (09/05), Devi Jaagran (10/01), Karva Chauth (10/19), Diwali (10/30) and Guru Nanak Jayanti (11/13).

HTCC's 10th Annual devotional program was celebrated with a grand "Rukmini Kalyanam" performed by the visiting priest from the Hindu Temple in St. Louis. Priests from Chicago and St. Louis were also invited to perform puja at "Devi Jaagran" and "Guru Nanak Jayanti" respectively.. Thanks to Hema Srinivasan, Chandra Rawlani, Kusum Malhotra and all the members of the HTCC's Devotional Programs Committee for all your help.

HTCC Youth Committee in coordination with Bal Sabha group organized annual Bike Ride to Rocheport & back followed by Picnic on May 15, 2016 at MLK Shelter in Columbia. This was a fun day for all young and young at heart. Besides the major festivals, some of the other exciting activities this year were:

Ganesh Idol Making on Sunday, August 28th during which children made Lord Ganesha, mooshika vahana, modaks and other treats for Lord Ganesha from clay, a favorite activity for kids as they choose to make their own Ganesh idols their way and then take it home and decorate it in many colors. Thanks to Gopal, Anantha and parents for organizing this special program.

Yoga for Body and Soul series started on Sunday, September 11, 2016, Thanks to Hema Srinivasan, chair of HTCC Cultural Programs who arranged for the Yoga series by yoga teacher Kate Walker.

Two musical concerts were hosted by HTCC Cultural Programs Committee in coordination with "Raagas of Columbia" on May 7th and also on October 22nd. Indian Classical Music Concerts held in the evening featured accomplished artists from India accompanied by artists from St. Louis and Columbia, MO. Thanks to Hema Srinivasan for bringing these concerts to our small community.

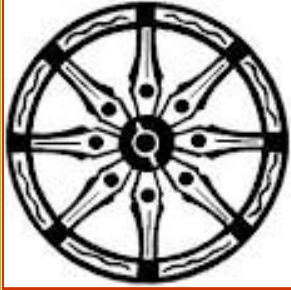
Summer Workshops :

1. The 1st HTCC Summer Workshop "Assemble your own Kaleidoscope" led by Meera & Chandra was very well attended amid lots of excitement and enthusiasm from our youth.

(Continued on page 2)

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Executive Board

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2. Vedic Chanting Workshop: Instructor Abilash taught Vedic Verses from Hinduism Scriptures.
3. Tech Workshop: Instructors Prasad and Smrita coached the attendees on how to become an Internet Wizard!
4. Sustainability Workshop: Gopalaratnam coached attendees on how to implement Sustainability at the Mandir!

The summer workshops were well attended and appreciated. Thanks to all the volunteers for a successful summer of learning and fun!

FUNDRAIDERS: HTCC volunteers participated in several community service activities thru out the year. The two major volunteer activities that they participated in recently are "CROPWALK" and "Share the Warmth". HTCC volunteers, with your generous donations, raised over \$1,000 for the "CROPWALK" and collected warm clothing for the underprivileged for "Share the Warmth" Coat Program. You may be aware of the new fundraising program "Mala Sponsorship" that was recently started by HTCC volunteers to raise funds for the Mandir. Volunteers will even make a mala to your specifications for you to take out. For more information please contact Hema Srinivasan, chairperson of HTCC's Devotional Programs Committee.

PRIEST for Mandir: Since summer of 2015 volunteers are working on various aspects of the process including filing a petition with **USCIS** (United States Citizenship & Immigration Services) in March 2016. We are pleased to inform you that the petition has now been approved. Currently the priest is preparing for a visa interview at the US Consulate in New Delhi. We hope to have the priest join us soon after he gets the US Visa this year.

HTCC MEMBERSHIP: We thank you for your support of HTCC and your active participation in the temple activities and celebrations through out the year. If you are not yet a member of HTCC, please join as a new member. If you are an annual member kindly renew your existing HTCC Annual membership or consider upgrading to a Sustaining membership (lifetime). Membership dues can be

paid online using paypal account at this link- <http://shanthimandir.missouri.org/join donate/>

VOLUNTEERS have helped with various mandir projects throughout the year. It is evident that a lot of hard work has gone in to make the landscaping look pretty. You may note that all the flowers for the pujas at the Mandir this year came from the Mandir garden. Thanks to Ananatha and Gopal who took the lead and all the volunteers who helped with various projects including but not limited to landscaping, painting inside and out, routine cleaning, upgrading of the facility. **Total donated labor from our volunteers just for the facilities repair project is estimated at between 175 – 180 hours.**

We had an inspirational start to 2017 at the Shanthi Mandir with Veda Chanting and Gayatri Japam. An added feature of the celebration this year was the offering of a mala of 108 Vadas (a traditional spiritual offering to Hanuman ji). The chants led by Young Adults well-versed in Sri Rudram (Namakam and Chamakam chanting) set the positive vibrations for the New Year at the Mandir. The event was attended by 50+ devotees. Donations to the HTCC at the devotional event brought in \$3,500+ to our temple. The 2017 HTCC Calendar, designed and created by Saathvik Kannan was distributed (**Thanks Saathvik!**).

HTCC is also gaining recognition amongst the Columbia Community and the local media. KBIA's Thinking Out Loud program aired a story on Shanthi Mandir on January 3rd. It's an excellent story of volunteers and teamwork that makes HTCC successful.

Volunteers make the Mandir and all its programs work. We thank all the volunteers for their continued support and encourage you to help by joining one or more committees that interest you. We want you to get involved and be part of the change? Please contact the chairperson of that committee or contact one of the EB officers who will gladly introduce you to the appropriate committee ☺

See you at the Mandir!

Ravi Thawani
Kirtadas Kutikkad
Kusum Malhotra
Abirami Elangovan

Thank You!

Donor Acknowledgement June, 2016– October, 2016

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

Akkinapragada, Nagasmittha
Chaudhary, Kunal and Ritcha Mehra
Mohan, Rajiv and Sunilima Sinha
Mohan, Saroj
Balla Sudharshan and Archana

\$51 - \$100

Cutkosky, Dale and Hema Srinivasan
Rawlani, Vinay & Roshini
Hans, Chetan and Ranjana
Ratneshwar, Srinivasan and Subbalakshmi

\$101- \$150

Anand, Sathish and Sushma

Balakrishnan, Elangovan and Abirami
Mahal, Satnam and Jasvir
Malhotra, Anil and Kusum
Thawani, Ravi and Meena
Tolani, Bhisham and Rajini

\$200- \$251

Khurana, Inder and Jasmit
Raganathan, Raman and Anusha

\$500 and up

Kalavala, SriRamachandra and Gowri
Loyalka, Sudharshan and Nirja
Gopalaratnam, Vellore and Anantha



Bal Sandesh

Newsletter of Bal Sabha of Columbia, MO

January 2017

Bal Sabha Officers

President
Prasad Calyam
Vice-President
Currently Vacant
Secretary
Puja Nistala
Treasurer
Muruganantham



EDITOR'S NOTE

Bal Sandesh wishes everyone a Happy New Year. Last quarter of 2016 was a festival season and hoping almost all of you celebrated one or more of the celebrations and festival get-togethers with friends and family. Congratulations to all the Bal Sabha youth for their phenomenal performances in India Nite's 25th anniversary. They all did an outstanding job and the event was enjoyed by all.

In this edition, we have a write-up on government, an essay on a global issues topic, a personal narrative on "Adventures in Mexico", a fictional writing piece "The Forest", and a write-up on Lord Ganesha.

Please submit your essays, poems, articles and drawings to Bal Sandesh as soon as you think you are ready for submission.

☺ The Editors

The Forest

Shruti Gautam - 8th Grade, Gentry Middle School

It came from the fog, this feeling of tranquility yet with a hint of uneasiness. Around me the haze swerved through the unfamiliar trees. The alien landscape exuded hostility. It seemed as though I had landed in a sort of a forest, maybe a jungle. I couldn't think straight, with the mist and the sudden wicked surges of wind around me. I stood alone between the tall trees whose branches were well above my short stature. The forest seemed dark, *selva oscura*, yet I questioned whether or not it was night.

The fog seemed to settle around me, and enveloped me in a vortex of thoughts. I sat down at the roots of a massive tree; isolated from the world I once belong to, I wondered how I ever reached this place. I tried to figure out what this fog had brought that changed me so. What had it brought that tossed my consciousness back and forth? Thoughts, facts, and memories that came so easily to me, which I had embedded in my heart, I now questioned without reason. This fog had turned me around. How could a human ever withstand such confusion of emotions, confusion so vile that you question even your own existence? This emotion turns one against one's own thoughts, the very building blocks of character. Only a truly sinful man could deserve such a punishment, and if so what am I? What have I done to deserve such a misfortune? With sweat beading on my forehead, I opened my dry lips to face the truth. Such a cruel punishment neither god nor destiny can give; only a human could do this. No human, however, is cold hearted enough to force this cruelty on others. This punishment of sequestration is self-inflicted.

My thoughts from before this forest were muddy. I must have done something treacherous for which I was brought here. I crumpled against the soft ground and fallen leaves. Why was the air so comforting? This feeling, as repugnant as it was, was welcoming and violently contrasted against the bleak forest. It seemed to beckon for me, promising a future of comfort. How could something so wrong feel so right? I fell asleep in defeat and rested my head from this battle with my self-consciousness.

I woke up panting and with the realization that it was all a dream. I raised my hand and felt my wet forehead. I looked around me and felt my thoughts coming back without the sense of question. I felt affirmative and looked around to see the familiar world. But, a dream like could not have come from the brain but from one's inner conscience. That's when it struck me; the fog had brought the vilest thing, something that was hidden deep in the never-ending abyss of Pandora's box with all the other evils of the world.

It was doubt ☺



Drawings by Little Hands

Left and Centre drawings by Shreeyanka
Right Hand Drawing by Meenu

Adventures in Mexico

Tia Rawat - 8th Grade, Gentry Middle School

This summer I went on a vacation with my family to Cancun, Mexico. On this trip, I went to places that left me breathless, saw astonishing sights, and did things I couldn't believe I did. These activities involved incredible things such as zip lining over forests, doing exotic activities in jungles and caves, and swimming and interacting with dolphins. We even snorkeled in an ocean outlet, a beautiful cenote, and an underwater cave.

On our first day at Mexico, my family, my friends and I went to an amusement park called Xplor. But this was no typical amusement park. Instead of rollercoaster rides, there was a zip lining course, a rainforest tour, and rafting and swimming in underwater caves. My friends and I got to do all of these activities but I enjoyed zip lining the most. I was a little nervous at first. I had zip lined before but at that time I wasn't as high off the ground as I was now. What if I fell? But once I began, I forgot about all of that. It was exhilarating. I had a gorgeous, scenic view of the lush greenery and rainforests below me. Outdoor zip lining was definitely something I planned on doing again.

Two days later, we took a shuttle to a place called Dolphin Discovery. At Dolphin Discovery we got to interact with dolphins. We touched them, did various poses with them for the photographers, and we even got to grab on to their fins and let the dolphins pull us along through the wa-

ter. We also got to learn about dolphins while doing the activities. It was such an amazing experience to touch them and watch them do amazing tricks. I had so much fun at that time. It was an incredible day that I will never forget.

On our last day at Mexico, I went snorkeling with my family. We got to snorkel in an ocean outlet, a cenote, and an underwater cave. I loved snorkeling in all of these places but I enjoyed the cenote the most. A cenote is like a natural sink-hole. It was a beautiful place. The water was so clear and blue and the surrounding trees were unnaturally green. There were so many different types of colorful fish. It was amazing. In addition to snorkeling in the cenote, I got to zip line in to the water and jump in to the cenote from fifty feet up. I jumped in to the water the first few times and once I built up my confidence I did a front flip. It was a lot easier than I thought it would be. The zip lining was also a bit scary but a lot of fun. Doing all these activities at the cenote was my favorite part of my vacation in Mexico.

Overall, I had a wonderful time during my trip in Mexico. I had made so many unforgettable memories, had amazing experiences, and did things that I would've never thought that I would do. Zip lining was so much fun and I loved interacting with the dolphins. It was so cool to snorkel and see so many exotic things. This vacation has given me the experiences of a lifetime and it is one that I will never forget ☺

Protect us Oh Elephant Face God

Aneesh Calyam - 2nd Grade, Mill Creek Elementary

This article has been inspired by the song 'Pahi Pahi Gajanana'

In September, we celebrated Ganesh Chaturthi with family and friends. I got to build an idol of Lord Ganesh with clay along with other kids. I also got to paint and do puja to the idol at my home and at the Shanti Mandir temple. My grandmother taught me a song on Ganesh which I sang at the temple. The song is 'Pahi Pahi Gajanana' - Protect Us Oh Elephant Faced God!

I have learnt many things about Lord Ganesh from that song. He is 'Parvati and Maheswara putra' - son of Parvati and Shiva, and 'Mushika Vahana' - he has a mouse to move around. He has 'Modaka Hasta' - he gives us sweet gifts with his hand and is also a 'Vigna Vinashaka' - he removes our obstacles so that we can feel better. He has 'Chamara Karna' - big ears to hear better all good things and is a 'Vamana Rupa' - short form. I salute the feet of the Elephant Faced God with love and kindness - 'Pada Namaste Gajanana'. Om Shanti, Shanti, Shantihi. Hari Hi Om ☺

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.



Bal Sabha meets every fourth Sunday of the month from 3:00 - 5:00 p.m. at Shanthi Mandir

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Global Issue Club at RBHS - Recounting a Personal Experience

Kanchan Hans - 9th Grade, Rock Bridge High School

Hi, my name is Kanchan Hans and I am a member of Global Issues Club at Rock Bridge High School. In this club, we learn about different issues around the world. We have a main topic each semester and then possibly a mini topic. The devastating impacts of flooding on residents of Louisiana prompted us to choose the floodings as a mini topic. Which reminds me of a similar incident I suffered. I am here to share with you my personal experience of one of America's biggest natural disasters which I witnessed at a tender age of only three. From when I was three years old to when I was eight, I lived in New Orleans, Louisiana. My family had moved there on August 10th 2005, three weeks prior to when Hurricane Katrina hit. We knew there was going to be a hurricane, in Louisiana it's inevitable. But what nobody knew until the final days before the hurricane, was that this one would be the most enormous they've ever seen. My family didn't get the support that we needed then so I plead to you now to give your support to those in need. Donating to victims of these floods is the least you could do to help.

When we encountered Hurricane Katrina, my family had only been living in America for two years. Fortunately, we had evacuated as soon as we found out the extent of the hurricane, but we were not easily able to. It was hard to find someone to take us in and we sat in traffic for hours at a time as did almost everybody else in New Orleans. We didn't know where to go and after my dad drove for over twenty hours, we reached my cousin's house in Pennsylvania. We went back to New Orleans after a month and we found water damage to our walls, our kitchen, and our clothes. We had almost no food to eat and were running out quick. There was water all

through the streets of New Orleans and yet we had to stand in line for two hours for just a sip of drinking water. There were no stores open, no electricity, and no way to contact our friends and family. We couldn't even get a simple roll of toilet paper. Contributing to families, in any way will be so helpful. Counseling, donating supplies, donating money, donating hours of time, any way you could think to help would be a great relief. My dad, as a scientist, lost years of research in his lab. As we arrived back, our boxes were still all unpacked, and even though the effects of Katrina hadn't stopped, we were faced with another hurricane, Hurricane Rita.

The aftermath of these natural disasters left us with hardly any money and even left our neighbors and friends without houses. The trauma we felt after being left with nothing but hardships, still remains in our minds. It was hard, but the donations by the Red Cross and other local agencies and individuals helped bring back residents of New Orleans to our lives.

Now coming back to these prevailing floodings in the recent months in 2016, I know what it's like to have almost no resources to survive and that is why I encourage all of you to donate something however small it may be whenever you come across a disaster impacting people. To give you an example, there are about two thousand students at the RBHS School and about two hundred faculty members. If each person were to donate one dollar, there would be over two thousand dollars to donate to people in need. Every donation counts and it means a lot to someone and can go a long way for all those in need 🙏

Tatya School of Performing Arts

Tatya School of performing arts is a Columbia, Mo based dance school promoting Bharatanatyam (Indian classical dance). Tatya is proud of the achievement of three of its students who won the first, second and third places at Saptami regional dance competition held in Chicago in September 2016 .



Ms. Akshara Balaji won 1st prize in the Bharatanatyam competition for the Midwest region organized by Saptami Foundation in Chicago, IL on September 24th, 2016.

In addition to being recommended for the National finals to be held in Dallas, TX in November, Akshara has also been identified as a "Potential Star".

Akshara has been learning dance since the age of 6, starting with her first guru Mrs. Anuradha Ramkumar in Auckland, New Zealand. In April

2016, she also won the "Natya Idol" competition organized by Soorya Performing Arts in St. Louis, MO. For the past 12 months, she was a student of Mrs. Eswary Sriram of Columbia, MO. She is currently a student of Mrs. Soujanya Madhusudan of Atlanta, GA

~ Akshara Balaji is a 4th grade student at Shepard Blvd Elementary School

Hi, I am Sriya Pokala and I got the 3rd place in the Chicago Saptami regional dance competition.

The preparations for the competitions began when my dance teacher, Miss Eswary suggested that I take part in the competition. She took a lot of interest and made me practice until I got all my steps and poses correct.

The long drive to Chicago and my teacher's and my efforts paid off when I stood third in the regional competition. I cannot believe how well I had done considering it was my 1st competition. My parents were overjoyed!



~ Sriya Pokala is a 6th grade student at Gentry Middle School

BAL SABHA KUDOS

Congrats to **Akshara Balaji** (1st prize) and **Sriya Pokala** (3rd prize) for their awards in the Chicago Saptami Regional Bharatanatyam dance competition.

Congrats to **Tia Rawat** for getting selected as 1st Chair for Flute for the CPS Award Band 2016-2017 year. A total of 9 flutists were selected from the 6 Middle schools and Tia was among the two selected from Gentry.

Congrats to **Kanchan Hans** for her multiple accomplishments.

-- Kanchan has been a Girl Scout since 1st grade. She has received her Bronze and Silver awards in Girl Scouts by helping her community learn and is continuing towards her Gold Award.

-- Kanchan also placed 1st in the CRC Regional Science Fair for her grade level.

-- Kanchan is one of the two ninth graders accepted into the Model United Nations (MUN) Club at RBHS High School, where she will get to go to Chicago this winter and speak and debate with other MUN students 🙏

Why do People Create Government ?

Leela Cullity Younger - 9th Grade, Rock Bridge High School

Government is a system that keeps our society intact. In a state of nature, where everyone is for themselves, peace and tranquility is rare. There are flaws in our human nature, such as greed and jealousy that would cause our society to collapse without a government. There are three main reasons why we need government. We need government to control human nature that may harm the rest of our society. To aid the overall well-being of a society to ensure they are comfortable, government is essential. Finally, we need government to protect ourselves from a dictatorship. People create government to help protect the society as a whole and to make sure each member of society is comfortable enough to live without many obstacles.

We need government to control natures that may be unbeneficial to the entirety of our society. For example The Parental Principal states: "In addition to a government goal of creating laws intended to discourage people from harming each other, some laws are written to prohibit self-harm." This statement is trying to prove that in order to live in a society without fear of another person harming you, you need to be protected by the laws that are created by our government. For example, without government what would prevent another citizen from stabbing you? There would be no protection. Secondly, this principal is trying to remind us that our government has laws that protect us from harming ourselves legally. For example we have the right not to answer questions without an attorney present, or in other words the right to remain silent. This law protects us from self-incrimination. Another principle known is The Harm Principle which states: "The belief that the primary goal of government and laws is to protect people from being harmed from others.(...) Harm Principle laws are essential and every government on earth has them." Every government has something in common, and that is this principle. This principle is important so that everyone in a society feels safe. Government is essential to creating a safe environment.

We need government to benefit the overall well-being of a society to ensure they are comfortable. We rely heavily on our government for comfortability. Generally when we wake up we have breakfast. We rely of the FDA, which is a government run company, to tell us that our cereal is safe to eat. The entirety of our days rely on the government. When we drive on the roads we trust

that the roads will be smooth enough to drive on. When students are sent to school, each state government is required to provide a public school that will bring knowledge to kids that will prepare them for their futures. The way you get to school or work is based off the government. Public busses and school busses are provided by our government. The government tries to help each individual with their retirement and college loans. Our banks which are linked to the government give us loans to buy houses. Without the government many obstacles would be in our way and each day would be harder than the way we live it today.

We need a solid government to protect societies from dictatorships. In the article packet: Why do Societies Need Government? Article #1 states: "The reason we need governments is to protect us from other worse power structures that would otherwise form in our midst and deprive us from our rights." A stable government that gives the people of the society a say, is a form of protection against the risks of a dictatorship. If all the people in a society or at least the majority can agree on something that they agree will keep them safe and comfortable then a society will mainly remain peaceful. In a dictatorship peace is an unsteady factor. One person deciding for the entirety of one group's decisions could cause anger in a society, which lowers the level of governmental protection. When people get angry against a decision that a dictator makes, riots will break out, which causes citizens to become less safe and protected. The point of a government is to assure safety and comfortability and in a dictatorship, those two factors may not guaranteed.

Government is made to protect a society and to make sure they are comfortable. Human natures can only be controlled by laws created by the government. Comfortability will only be ensured by government run companies. Finally, government is essential to protect a society from a dictatorship. There are many reasons to why a government would be created, including protection from sources of harm and comfortability that prevents us from obstacles. Those are the main two support systems in the creation of a government. Without government our societies would be failing and dying out rapidly, it's important that each society creates their own forms of government so that each government solidly stabilizes their nation🇺🇸

CROP Hunger Walk 2016



The HTCC Helping Hands team once again had a great showing at the 2016 CROP Hunger Walk. This year the event was held at the Stephens Lake Park on September 25 but did not include the traditional 5K Run. HTCC was represented by a team of 23 walkers. The team of walkers raised \$1,203 and was represented by many youth, including Amulya, our youngest at just under 1 yr old, Anya, Charu, Jaideep, and Tia. We were the 3rd highest fundraising team at this annual event. Despite predictions of rain, the day turned out to be wonderful for outdoor activities. **A great big THANKS to all our walkers and donors!**

Shreemad Bhagavad Gita – Part 29

Saroj Mohan

We have learned from Verse 27 that people remain deluded due to desires and attachments, which keep them from seeing the Lord or from self-realization.

In the 28th verse, Shri Krishna describes the qualities of His devotees, who evoke Him at all times.

Shri Krishna says, “Devotees, free of desire, who are beyond sin, who have broken the bonds of attachment and who are without delusion are purified devotees of mine, they contemplate on me and worship me with full determination.”

Devotees who are purified by good spiritual practices and virtuous deeds and those who sin no more, who worship and meditate on the Lord steadily, are without delusion.

Shri Krishna, in the 29th verse, describes the condition of those devotees who have surrendered to the Lord. Shri Krishna says, “Those who strive for *Jaramarana mokshaya* or who want to be free from old age, disease and death, surrender unto me, take refuge in me, know the *Brahman* or Ultimate Truth - the knowledge of the Self and all about unselfish, egoless actions.”

The Self is the substratum on which this whole universe is superimposed. Those who meditate and contemplate on the Self, the Lord, eventually realize Him. The changing duality consists of birth, growth, old age, disease and finally death. Those who want to be free from all these, the duality of ignorance, strive for self-realization, the Infinite Consciousness, which is the substratum of All. Once one realizes the Self, the rest is history. Once the seeker identifies with the Spirit, the non-dual Self, ignorance and ego are finished. This is knowledge. Once there is realization that the Self in ‘individual’ is the Self in ‘all’ that is *Brahma Gyan* or the Knowledge of the *Brahman*. The knower of the *Brahman* performs all his actions without ego. All the actions and activities are the play of the Divine.

In the 30th verse, Shri Krishna explains the glory of self-realization and the man of wisdom, who knows the Lord in all his glory.

Shri Krishna says, “The man of wisdom who knows me as *Adhibhoot*, *Adhidaivam* and *Adhiyagna*, even at the time of death, he is steadfast and focuses his devotion on me, and knows me.”

To understand the glory of the Self completely, it is necessary to know the meanings of the three words and experience them well. For example, steam, ice, clouds and water are the same element, namely water, even though their names and forms are different.

Part 29 in this series by Saroj Mohanji on Shreemad Bhagavad Gita includes discussions from the 28th verse of Chapter 7 to the 2nd verse of Chapter 8.



Adhibhoot means the elements, the world of objects.

Adhideva means the gods of senses, the power of the spirit behind all sense organs that keep them active and alive.

Adhiyagna means all the sacrifices or actions, the conditions under which all the perceptions, mental, physical and intellectual take place. All the activities pertaining to *yagna*, objects of all *yagnas* are called *Adhiyagna*.

Shri Krishna makes it clear that it is not a thing of blind faith. Whoever truly knows the above-mentioned things and has a subjective experience of the fact, at his time of death, such a man of wisdom truly knows Him and attains Him, becomes one with Him.

This concludes the chapter seven of *Gyan Vigyan Yoga* of Bhagavad Gita. *Gyan* is knowing the subject but *Vigyan* is experiencing it. Once the glorious subjective experience of the fact dawns, there is nothing but Bliss and Peace all around. This is the end of a magnificent journey of self-realization. This feeling of one-ness is beyond words. The eternal bliss is complete. There is the one-ness of formless and forms. This state of awareness is matchless. Infinite Consciousness prevails.

There is nothing left to be said about this sublime state. The *Gopis* of *Vrindavana* enjoyed this bliss in their matchless love and devotion for Shri Krishna. They beheld Him both in form and in a formless state.

In the *Upanishad* of the Bhagavad Gita, the knowledge of the *Brahman* or the Supreme Being, the science of yoga, the dialogue between Shri Krishna and Arjuna, this seventh discourse is designated as the Yoga of Knowledge and Self-realization, or *Gyan Vigyan Yoga*.

We now move on to the eighth chapter of the Bhagavad Gita. The 8th blossom of this divine bouquet is called *Akshara Brahma Yoga* or the yoga of Imperishable *Brahman*.

In the previous chapter Lord Shri Krishna concluded by declaring that “whosoever knows *Adhibhoot*, *Adhidaiva* and *Adhiyagna* knows Me and comes to Me.”

Once we know the ocean, we know the waves, wavelets etc. Similarly, whosoever knows the Self, knows all there is to be known. The actions, instruments of actions and perceptions are also known. Such a dynamic man or woman of wisdom knows all in full perfection.

In other words the essence of all, the Self or Spirit indwelling in all is *Adhideva*. The God of sense organs that keep them alive and active is called *Adhidaiva* and the instruments for actions and perception like hands and eyes etc. are *Adhidaiva* too.

All the elements, the world of objects etc. are called *Adhibhoot*. All the actions pertaining to *Yagna*, objects of *Yagnas*, sacrifice etc. are called *Adhiyagna*.

These lofty words are very good and potent but not very easy to comprehend by a seeker who is just setting out on this path of Self-realization.

So from Verse 1 to Verse 17 Arjuna asks questions to make these words clearer and Shri Krishna makes them clear through His answers.

In the 1st and 2nd verses Arjuna asks, “O *Purushottam* or the supreme among men, what is *Brahman*, what is *Adhyaatmam* and what is *Karma* or actions? What are *Adhibhoot* and *Adhidaiva* said to be?”

Continuing in the 2nd verse, Arjuna says “O *Madhusoodan* or slayer of the demon *Madhu*, who is known as *Adhiyagna* in this body and *Prayaan-kaale Niyataatmabhih* or at the time of death, how can You be known by a *Niyataatmabhih* or man of self-control?”

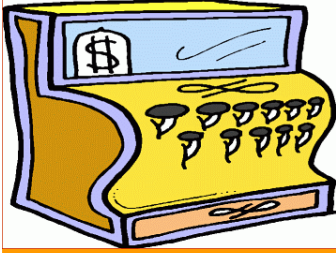
Arjuna wants to learn how a *yagna* is offered and in what way the Supreme Being will accept it. He wants to learn how the Supreme Being can be known and how the person who is in full control of his senses can remember the Supreme Being at the time of his death.

रसोऽहमप्सु कौन्तेय प्रभास्मि शशिसूर्ययोः । प्रणवः सर्ववेदेषु शब्दः खे पौरुषं नृषु ॥ 8॥

O son of Kuntī [Arjuna], I am the taste of water, the light of the sun and the moon, the syllable om in the Vedic mantras; I am the sound in ether and ability in man.

The Lord describes his origins through commonly relatable (the five) human senses instead of complicated spiritual abstractions.

Sri Krishna, Shreemad Bhagavad Gita - Chap 7, Verse 8



HTCC Quarterly Fiscal Report

For the period April 1st, 2016 - June 30th, 2016

Prepared by Abirami Elangovan, Treasurer, November 19th, 2016

Quarterly Revenues

Interest Income		
Interest income	\$130.03	\$130.03
Membership:		
Annual Family Membership	\$50.00	\$50.00
Donations:		
Check Donations	\$2,204.32	
Hundi Donations/Prayer Services	\$228.00	
Capital Campaign	\$4,013.00	\$6,445.32
Facilities Use Donations:		
Birthday party	\$60.00	
Carnatic Music Concert	\$60.00	
Farewell	\$115.00	\$235.00
Fund Raiser:		
Mandir Cookbook/ Towels Sales	\$28.00	\$28.00
Other Revenues:		
Tenth Anniversary Celebrations	\$1,895.00	\$1,895.00
Total Quarterly Revenues		\$8,783.35

Quarterly Expenses

Administrative	\$7.50	
Bank Charges	\$9.27	
Lawn and Garden	\$1,139.43	
Maintenance and Supplies	\$166.50	
Priest Expenses	\$325.00	
Special Events	\$47.58	
Tenth Anniversary Celebrations	\$686.00	
Upgrades and Repairs	\$834.79	
Utilities	\$1,335.61	
Total Quarterly Expenses		\$4,551.68

Net Income for the Quarter

\$4,231.67

HTCC Quarterly Fiscal Report

For the period July 1st, 2016 - September 30th, 2016

Prepared by Abirami Elangovan, Treasurer, November 19th, 2016

Quarterly Revenues

Interest Income		
Interest income	\$67.32	\$67.32
Membership:		
Annual Family Membership	\$100.00	\$100.00
Donations:		
Check Donations	\$974.00	
Hundi Donations/Prayer Services	\$251.00	
Capital Campaign	\$1,107.00	\$2,332.00
Facilities Use Donations:		
Facility Use	\$230.00	\$230.00
Fund Raiser:		
Mandir Cookbook/ Towels Sales	\$30.00	
Jayanthi Food & Maalai	\$304.00	
	\$198.00	\$532.00
Other Revenues:		
Summer Workshops	\$260.00	\$260.00
Total Quarterly Revenues		\$3,521.32

Quarterly Expenses

Administrative	\$10.50	
Bank Charges	\$2.80	
Insurance	\$1,889.00	
Lawn and Garden	\$467.00	
Maintenance and Supplies	\$98.48	
Printing and Mailing	\$8.10	
Special Events	\$86.31	
Sponsorship	\$100.00	
Upgrades & Repairs	\$8,798.68	
Utilities	\$1,016.63	
Total Quarterly Expenses		\$12,477.50

Net Income for the Quarter

-\$8,956.18



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

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

Feb 25th

Shivaratri

Time: TBD

Contact: Uma Srinath: (573)446-8403

March

Holi Celebration

Time: TBD

Contact: Gagneesh Rawat: (573)808-3491

April 8th- 9th

Akhand Ramayan

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

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

Contact: Chandra Rawlani : (573)864-552

April 22nd

HTCC 11th 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)**

Mandir Renewal Projects 2016

A team of 44 volunteers, including many youth, worked 4 days in August and September to undertake several repair and renewal projects at the Mandir. The projects included painting the altar wall, cleaning the ceiling grid, installing new ceiling tiles, sealing to fix minor roof leaks, washing and reinstalling prayer hall flags, painting and installing new sign board, cleaning and varnishing window interiors, installing new window blinds, sanding, cleaning and painting exterior lumber and stairs, sawing off unwanted trees on the lot, tending to garden berm and landscaping, and thorough cleaning of the prayer hall. Donated labor from our volunteers for these Fall projects is estimated to be between 175 – 180 hours. We are grateful to those who were generous with their time and talent.

Thank you!



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

Non-Profit Org
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Columbia
MO 65201

Current Programs at the Mandir (January 30, 2017)

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.
Shishu Vihar	1 st /3 rd /4 th	Sunday	10:15 - 11:15 a.m.

Service Programs

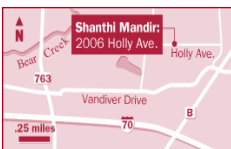
Volunteering at Central Missouri Food Bank	1 st	Tuesday	5:30 - 6:30 p.m.
Narayan Seva (Sai Group - St. Francis Home Lunch)	2 nd	Sunday	11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Non-Perishable Food Collection (Ongoing continuously)			
Soup and Sandwich Service	4 th	Sunday	5:30 - 7:00 p.m.

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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1-800-SOCKET-3