

November 2014



THE CONCH

www.conch.org.au

“Lord Sri Krishna and Arjuna blew their celestial conches to rally and enthuse the devotees.”

NEWSLETTER

New Govardhana Community



krishnafarm.com

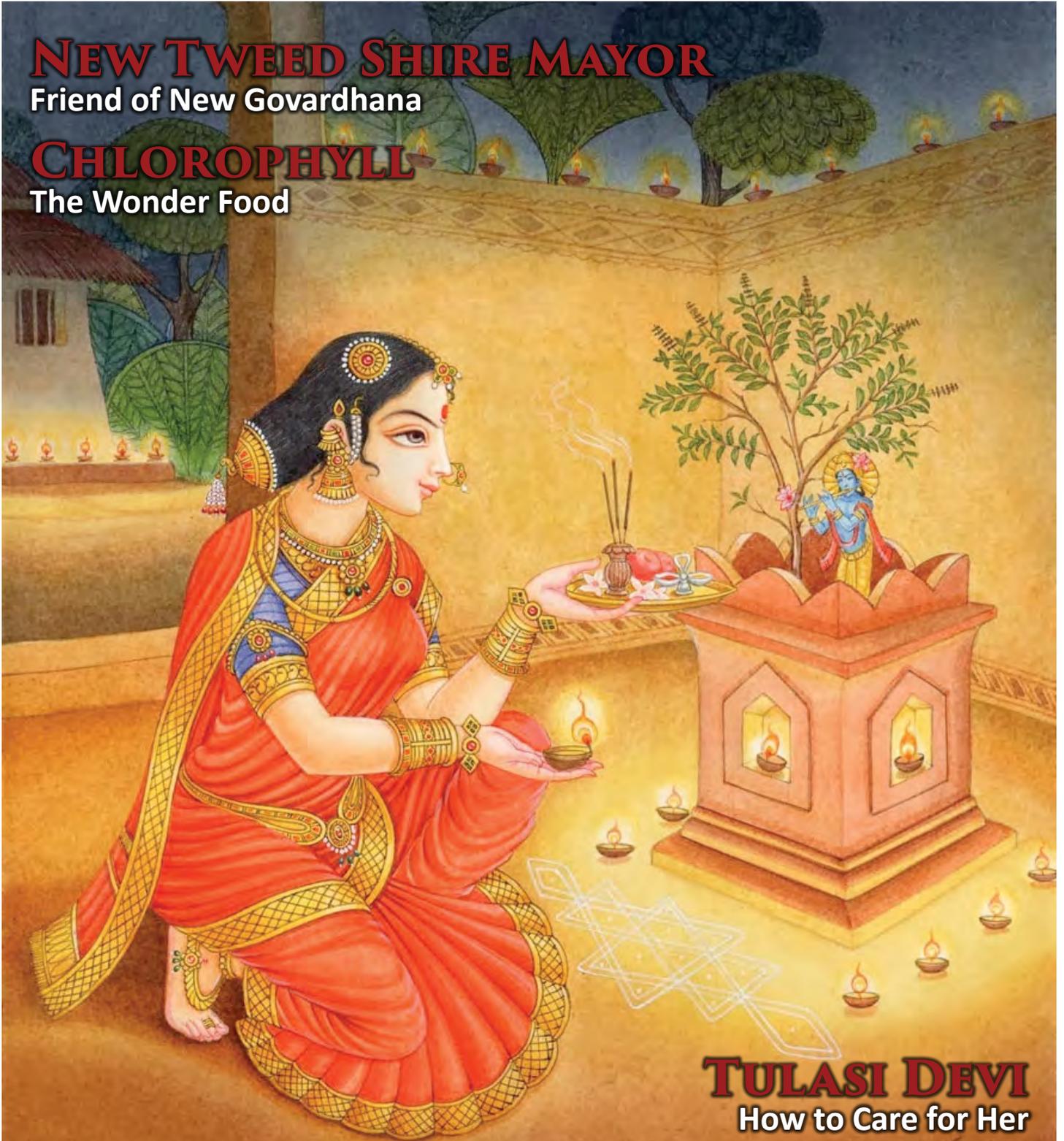
Dedicated to His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, Founder-Acharya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

NEW TWEED SHIRE MAYOR

Friend of New Govardhana

CHLOROPHYLL

The Wonder Food



TULASI DEVI

How to Care for Her

SRILA PRABHUPADA UVACA + GOSHALLA GOSS + KULI CATCHUP + FILM REVIEW

SRIMATI TULASI DEVI

Excerpted from: The Art of Caring for Srimati Tulasi Devi *by Isanah devi dasi and the ISKCON Times: Journal of the Hare Krishna Movement.*

The transcendental appearance day of Tulasi is on the full moon day of Kartika. It is said that Lord Krishna Himself worships her on this day.



Photo: Urvasi devi dasi

A decorative tulasi pot in rural India.

Srila Prabhupada wrote:

“The service Tulasi offers to Krishna is pure, so we should always endeavour after becoming her servant. She is a pure devotee and thus she has appeared on this planet to render service to Krishna by being offered to His lotus feet.”

Govinda dasi, the first *tulasi pujari* in ISKCON wrote: “Vrinda devi, of whom Tulasi Devi is an expansion, is in charge of the Vrindavana *lila* – the pastimes of Radha and Krishna. She decides which flowers will bloom; which birds will sing; which songs will be sung; which breezes will blow; which food will be served; which games will be played; which musical instruments will be played. Radha and Krishna have made her the queen of Vrindavana – the choreographer of *lilas*. Her parrots are her communication service.

“By her mercy, Vrinda Devi has appeared in this material world as the plant Tulasi Devi, giving us a chance to serve her and to beg her to bestow us with love of Radha and Krishna.”

During this auspicious Kartika month, the marriage of Tulasi Devi and Salagrama-sila is celebrated in honour of their history, related in the *Brahma-vaivarta Purana*.

Tulasi took her birth as a beautiful young woman who was exceedingly chaste. She prayed to have Lord Narayana as her husband. Lord Brahma, however, arranged for her to marry the cowherd boy Sudama who had been cursed to take birth in a demonic family as Sankhacuda. In order to kill Sankhacuda, Lord Vishnu impersonated him. Due to associating with Lord Vishnu, Tulasi’s chastity was broken and her husband was able to be killed.

After she cursed the Lord to become a stone for being stone-hearted, He took the form of Salagrama-sila. Because she had prayed to have the Lord as her husband, annually the marriage of Tulasi Devi and Salagrama-sila is performed.

Wherever *tulasi* is planted, that place becomes purified. If we worship *tulasi* nicely and pray to her for mercy, she can grant us love for Krishna.

Jaya Tulasi Devi! 🙏



Photo: bingimages.com

The delicate flowers of the tulasi plant.

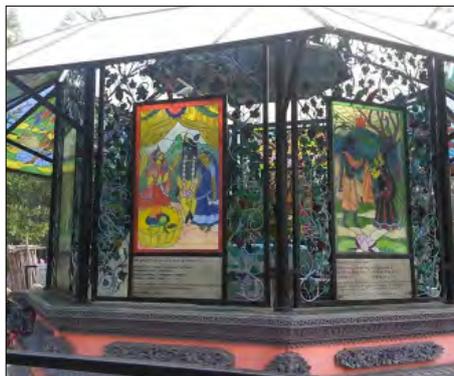


Photo: Source Unknown

The tulasi house, featuring stained glass panels, at Krishna Balarama Mandir, Vrindavana, India.

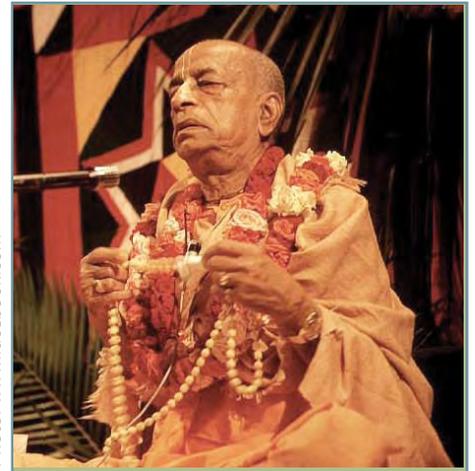


Photo: www.facebook.com

ISKCON Founder-Acharya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Srila Prabhupada Uvaca

Today Govardhanadhari, Giridhari, Lord Krishna, lifted the mountain. According to Vedic literature there are different demigods. Sometimes you will find in Greek mythology the gods of the water, gods of the thunderbolt. These are not imagination. Actually they are facts. But due to our insufficient knowledge we do not know how the material nature is being controlled. So when Krishna was on this planet and He was playing the part of a cowherd boy, it was known to all over the universe that “God has come, taken incarnation, and He is on the earth planet, and He is at Vrindavana playing the part of a cowherd boy ...”

[However] ... it is not that everybody understood that Krishna was the Supreme Personality of Godhead ... Only few persons, the five brothers of the Pandavas and the damsels of Vrindavana, only in the fingers’ count, say, out of the whole population, say, hundred or two hundred men knew Him that He was the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Govardhana Puja lecture, Bombay 1972

Front cover image: Devotee offering puja honouring the marriage of Tulasi and the Lord.
shriradhavallabh.files.wordpress.com

KULI CATCHUP EBONY ANNE PFENNIGWERTH

By Mandakini devi dasi

Q. How did you come to attend New Govardhana Gurukula?

A. When I was ten, my family moved to Murwillumbah in 2007 from the Gold Coast. Mum had a property here and decided it would be a good place to bring up children. She immediately started looking for a suitable school for my younger brother and myself. We tried different schools, but I couldn't get enthused about any of them, until I came to the *gurukula* and spent an orientation day there.

Q. What was it that attracted you?

A. I loved the way the day started with an *arati* and singing, instead of the usual roll call. I also found the school Deities very attractive. Straightaway I knew it was right for me. From the very first day, I told my mother that I wanted to be a vegetarian.

Q. What were your favourite subjects?

A. English and music. I learned how to play the *mrdanga*, sing *bhajan*s and appreciate *Bhagavad-gita*. In my last year I was nominated as the school captain.

Q. How did the family accept your new way of life?

A. My mother, who has always been a seeker, became interested in the philosophy. Upon seeing how happy I was, my brother Jordan asked if he could enrol in the school. As a family we began to visit the temple. Mum eventually took up garland-making and paraphernalia duties.

Q. Weren't you seriously studying classical ballet at the time?

A. Yes, I studied for five years with the intention of becoming a professional dancer. When I eventually learned that my ankles were not strong enough to enter the profession, I was heartbroken. My instructor told me I could keep going, but I would not be able to fulfill my ultimate ambition. I felt quite lost, but Krishna has certainly filled the void.



Photography: Srinivas Luxton

Ebony Pfennigwerth.

Q. What did you do when you left school?

A. I lived at New Govardhana as a *bhaktine* for a year. In that time, I made garlands, did paraphernalia service and helped out with administration duties. Then I moved up to Burleigh Heads to work at Govindas restaurant.

Q. How is that working out for you?

A. Very well. I feel blessed to be able to be employed in a spiritual atmosphere, hearing *kirtana* all day and serving *prasadam*. The association is great and I am feeling very satisfied.

Q. And the future?

A. I have been accepted by Southern Cross University, and starting next year I begin a course to obtain an Associate Degree in Law. At that time I still expect to continue working at Govindas part time. I am hoping to use my degree to work in the areas of Animal Rights, vegetarianism and similar causes. 🙏

“ I loved the way the day started with an *arati* and singing, instead of the usual roll call. ”

FRIENDS REUNITE AFTER 30 YEARS

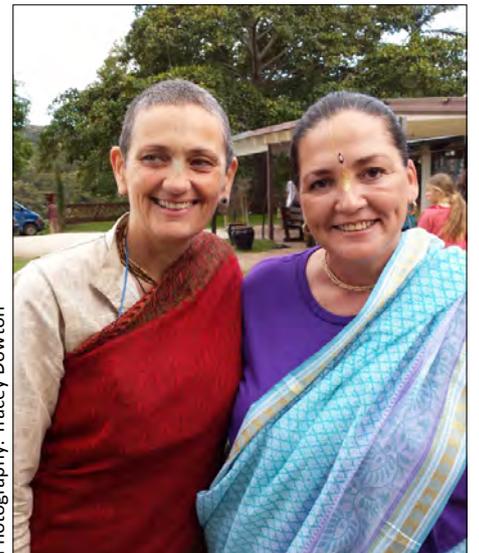
By Urvasi devi dasi

During the recent Holy Name Retreat I took my seat next to a sari-clad lady. As we exchanged glances she enquired, “Urvasi?” I looked at her quizzically, and she repeated “Urvasi, don't you remember me – Loretta?” Still not sure how she knew me, and racking my brain trying to remember her, she then said, “St Vincent's Hospital – nurse – remember, you used to come to the nurses' quarters to do your laundry when the machine at the *brahmacharini ashrama* was full?”

Then it all came flooding back. When I was a *brahmacharini* in Sydney (in the mid 1980s, just before my marriage) I had met Loretta, who was very interested in Krishna consciousness, and often visited the Radha Gopinatha temple, then in Kings Cross.

She then pulled out her bead bag to show me, and said, “I am still chanting after 30 years!” I was gobsmacked. And then she pulled out an old, soft covered *Bhagavad-gita*, held it up so I could see, and said, “And I am still reading this, too”.

Loretta lives on the NSW south coast with her husband and family. She still regularly chants and reads. 🙏

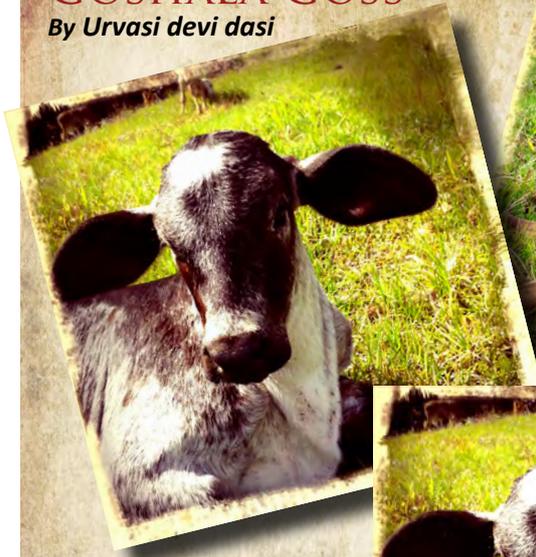


Photography: Tracey Dowton

At the recent Holy Name Retreat Urvasi devi dasi (L) and Loretta O'Neill (R) reunite after 30 years.

GOSHALA GOSS

By Urvasi devi dasi



Clockwise starting above:
New calves, Shyamalika,
Ekadasi, Kamalini, Janaki
(Brihat behind her) and
Om Shanti.



It is with much sadness that we farewell Raga, one of our Gir cows. Raga came to us from a breeder at Alstonville a couple of years ago, with her best friend, Kunti. They both fitted in at New Govardhana very easily due to their peaceful natures. After sometime they both became pregnant and went through their pregnancy and birthing together. Kunti gave birth to Maharani and Raga gave birth to Radhika, both on the day before Radhastami 2013. Unfortunately, Maharani left her body after only two weeks due to a paralysis tick, and Radhika needed to be handraised due to Raga's indifference toward her.

In August this year, Raga gave birth to her second calf, Janaki, who

had a shaky start in life, but pulled through, due to the dedication of the cowherds. Raga bonded with her new calf and everything seemed to be going fine. However, Raga was struck down with a mystery illness, and despite all available care, she left her body on 28 September 2014, surrounded by many devotees, WWOOFers and wellwishers. Janaki is now being hand fed three times a day to ensure that she reaches her full, healthy potential.

If you look carefully, as you drive past the cow pastures at New Govardhana, you will see that we have seven new calves. Most of them are Gir/Friesian crosses and they are all healthy and happy. 🐄

THE WONDER OF CHLOROPHYLL

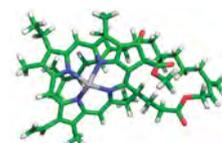
By Elin Rosenblad

My time in the Krishna Village gave me the opportunity to research nutrition and raw food and put my findings into practice. I have gained the most fascinating insights by looking at chlorophyll, the molecule that converts sunlight into energy and is responsible for photosynthesis – the process that feeds the entire planet.

Chlorophyll is often referred to as *liquefied sunlight* or *plant's blood*, not only because it gives the plants their green colour, but also because of its similarities to human blood, which is astounding. Blood and chlorophyll have very similar structures, the main difference being their central atoms; iron in haemoglobin (which gives our blood its red colour), and magnesium in chlorophyll (the green colour in plants). According to the USDA, 80 per cent of the US population suffers from magnesium deficiency, a major factor behind heart disease, depression and auto-immune disorders. It appears that we are meant to consume a lot more greens!

Because of its similarities with haemoglobin, chlorophyll rapidly helps to rebuild and clean our blood, which assists the brain and body tissue to function at an optimum level. It also has a strong anti-oxidant capacity; binds and removes heavy metals from our bodies; fights fungus and other unfriendly bacteria; and, best of all, decreases our cravings for sweet things.

So, how is chlorophyll best consumed? Wheatgrass, which contains 70 per cent chlorophyll, is one of the best sources found today, but leafy greens such as kale, spinach and sprouts are also excellent sources. This is why you should add greens to smoothies and juices. If you are too busy to make them yourself, you can pick up a bottle of freshly squeezed Jeeva Juice at the Krishna Village reception on every weekday. We also sell trays of wheatgrass. 🌱



Left:
Chlorophyll
molecule.

TULASI CARE

By Govardhana Seva dasa

Dhanesvara dasa has been looking after New Govardhana's *tulasi* plants for some years. He was very happy to share his experiences with *The Conch* and its readers. When asked to outline the care and maintenance of *tulasi*, Dhanesvara listed the following main points.

1. *Attitude of the carer:* It is very important that the care and maintenance of *tulasi* is performed with devotion, love and respect.
2. *Essential needs:* Regular watering, nutrients, pruning, etc., must not be neglected. *Tulasi* plants should be treated with the same care as your own body.
3. *Fertilisation.* The plants should have the recommended doses of suitable fertilisers. For example: potash; iron phillite; liquefied seaweed fertiliser; and liquified cow dung.
4. *Potting and re-potting.* When potting or re-potting *tulasi* plants, place a layer of charcoal in the bottom of the pot, fill with a good quality potting mix and finish with a layer of suitable compost. All these can be obtained from local landscape suppliers and plant nurseries.
5. *Local conditions.* *Tulasi* plants love the sun and the rain and being both warm and damp (but not too wet). They dislike very hot, dry and windy conditions and also very cold weather. They should be placed in a position where they are sheltered from excess heat, cold and the wind. *Tulasi* does not like temperatures below approximately 17°C.
6. *Pests.* Regular examination of the plants for insect pests such as aphids and spider mites. These can be removed by using a mixture of liquid soap and water together with some neem oil.
7. *Manjaris.* The *manjaris* are the seedpods of the *tulasi* plant and should be removed regularly to encourage the growth of the leaves. To pick *manjaris*, use the index finger and thumb of the right hand, then apply a little pressure to make a clean snap. You may find it helpful to hold the branch or the stem you

Photo: shriradhavallabh.files.wordpress.com



Tulasi Devi is an expansion of Vrinda-devi in this world. Srimati Tulasi Devi is worshiped in the morning, after mangala arati, when all the devotees should attend to her worship and circumambulation.

are working on with the left hand to steady the *tulasi* as you remove the *manjaris*. If you are having problems in making a clean break, then use a small pair of scissors kept only for this purpose. Although it is not traditional to use scissors, it is better than causing more pain to *tulasi* by ripping her stem. Avoid using fingernails. The *tulasi pranama* mantra should be first recited (same procedure for collecting leaves) and then continuously chant the following:

*tulasi amrta janmasi
sada tvam kesava-priya
kesavartham cinomi tvam
varada bhava sobhane*

“O Tulasi, you are born from nectar. You are always very dear to Lord Keshava. Now, to worship Lord Keshava, I am collecting your leaves and *manjaris*. Please bestow your mercy on me.”

8. After removing the *manjaris* they should not be discarded. They are used in many of the temple services including *Raja Bhoga* offering, garlands for the Deities, and offerings at the feet of Sri Krishna. The fully developed *manjari* can also be placed in paper bags to dry and use as seeds for future plantings.

FILM REVIEW: EXPELLED – NO INTELLIGENCE ALLOWED

By Anjali DeJager
(New Govardhana Gurukula student)

Expelled: No Intelligence Allowed is a 97-minute documentary released in 2008. Directed by Nathan Frankowski and hosted by Ben Stein, the film shows how freedom of speech and inquiry is being removed by the evolution of science. The film made more than US\$7.7m^[1], which made it the 18th highest grossing documentary in the US.

Stein converses with many atheists, asking them how they believe life started. The film uses many analogies, such as the comparison made to the cell. (When Charles Darwin proposed his theory of evolution, he stated that a human cell was about as complicated as a simple car.) It is now proven by science that a cell is more complicated than a galaxy. Therefore science has proven that Darwin's statement is incorrect. There are many more examples that contradict the atheistic point of view.

Richard Dawkins, author of *The God Delusion* and committed atheist puts forward his theory that perhaps a life form with a higher intelligence seeded the universe. However, he could not answer the question of where the intelligent life form had come from.

Considerable use of vintage film clips added humour to the film and held my attention. The music, sound effects and visuals elicits strong emotions.

The wall that separates the atheistic point of view from the religious point of view may be growing higher. The rebellion of atheists who watched the film and the reviews some of them left would have assisted with this growth. Many scientists in the early days not only held a religious point of view, but agreed that it actually made it easier to be a scientist. Therefore, Darwin's theory of evolution is debatable. 🙏

[1] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Expelled:_No_Intelligence_Allowed

THE MAYOR OF TWEED SHIRE, CR. GARY BAGNALL

By Mandakini devi dasi

After two years of service on the Tweed Shire Council, Mr Gary Bagnall was elected Lord Mayor (a two to four year term) of the Shire in September 2014.

In an interview with *The Conch*, Gary expressed his gratitude to his 'Krishna family' for their support, claiming that a significant number of devotees had voted for him.

Gary and wife, Linley, have operated the New Leaf vegetarian restaurant in Main Street for 12 years. Linley has been a vegetarian all her life, and Gary for the last 35 years. The couple's sons, William, 17, and James, 13, were both raised as vegetarians, and count many young devotees among their circle of friends.

Local devotees have been employed at the New Leaf over the years.

Eight years ago, Gary requested devotees travelling to India to bring back Deities for the restaurant, along with 'costumes'. Sri Sri Gaura Nitai appeared, and the daily offerings began.

An occasional visitor to New Govardhana, Gary recalls a never-to-be-forgotten incident when he came to the farm to participate in a Rathayatra Festival.

The area was flooded. Keen to attend the festivities, Gary started to carefully make his way across the bridge. He lost his footing and fell in the river. Hitting a log, the strong current pulled him under and rapidly carried him away. Gary was in serious trouble. Fortunately, Syama McCrae was on patrol with the temple kayak and whisked him to safety.

Says Gary, "Syama saved my life." 🙏



Photo: Aravinda dasa

Mayor Bagnall with Sri Sri Gaura Nitai in his cafe The New Leaf in Murwillumbah.



Photo: Source Unknown

Bhaktine Jue was initiated on 11 October by HH Kadamba Kanana Swami and received the name of Jhulan devi dasi. Jhulan means 'a servant who makes arrangements for Radha and Krishna's swing festival'. Jhulan is pictured above receiving her beads at the initiation ceremony held in Melbourne.



Photo: Source Unknown

Former New Govardhana resident Danakeli Chintamani devi dasi (previously Bhaktine Kirsty) receives initiation from HH Indradyumna Swami in Vrindavana recently.

IN FOCUS: GO GOVARDHANA GIRLS!

By Mandakini devi dasi

For the very first time in the history of New Govardhana, an official women's *ashrama* is rapidly unfolding. Ajita dasa has given his consent for the transformation of the top guest house into a women's *ashrama*, thanks to Padma devi dasi, who moved on to the farm a couple of months ago.

Padma is organising the *ashrama*, delegating mentors for the girls and generally overseeing the project. With impressive qualifications, Padma is more than up for the task.

The fledgling *ashrama*, which is almost at full capacity, is soon to take in more aspiring devotees including *bhaktines* from the

WWOOFer program. We now have *bhaktines* and *brahmacharinis* also coming to New Govardhana from other ISKCON centres.

The *ashrama* girls have a plethora of services, including temple duties; cooking; *bhajan*s; cultural activities; and garland-making. Notably, the girls were especially busy serving guests and VIPs during the recent retreats and festivals. A training program to learn how to preach is also under way.

Padma's aspiration is to help create a pleasant Krishna conscious environment for her spirited charges.

The girls are enthusiastically coming on board and currently joining forces to organise their new *ashrama*. 🙏



Photo: Ricky Lashand

Chaitanya Kesav Lashand was born on 18 September 2014 to proud parents Ricky and Radhika Lashand. Chaitanya is the first grandchild of devotees Shyamsundara and Rita Lashand, who can be seen performing regular service at the New Govardhana Temple and at the Sunday Feasts.

SNAPSHOTS BY ANANTA VRINDAVANA DASA HOLY NAME RETREAT



His Holiness Sacinandana Swami and His Grace Madhava Prabhu chanting at the recent Holy Name Retreat.



Japa Vijaya D'Costa:
"It was a blissful experience – chanting with such intensity."



New Govardhana girls (L to R) Jhulan devi dasi and Bhaktine Teiana delve deep into the holy name.



(L to R) Krishna Murari dasa, Hladini Radha dasi and Bhanu Nandini dasi.
"The Holy Name Retreat opened the doors of my heart to a fresh breeze of bhakti, filling me with overwhelming happiness and love for Krishna. It was the highlight of my year," said Haldini Radha.



Bhaktine Dennyse Seow:
"Unfolding realisations of the holy name ... soaking in the nectar."



Advaita Myler:
"Inspiring, motivating, elevating and purifying."

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

The Conch is your community newsletter, and we invite you to submit articles for publication. Articles should be 300 words or less and supplied in MS Word via email to newgovconch@gmail.com. Photographs must be in JPG format. Please provide the name of the author and

the photographer. Anonymous submissions will not be published. Deadline is the 12th of each month. Occasionally a submission could be held over to a later edition. All submissions may be edited, proofread or rejected without notice.



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For enquiries, comments or suggestions, contact: newgovconch@gmail.com

GOVARDHANA PUJA HIGHLIGHTS BY TREVOR GORE



HARINAMA SANKIRTANA KI JAYA

Wednesdays 10.30 am

Byron Bay *harinama* at the park opposite the Post Office. For further details and transport information, contact
Parama Karuna dasa
0439 280 362

Friday Evenings 6.30 pm

Bhakti Centre Surfers Paradise
bhakticentregoldcoast.com.au

Sunday Mornings

Northern NSW & Gold Coast
folkkrishna.com/program.htm
Isvara dasa 0411 825 549

NOVEMBER CALENDAR

(from Vaishnava calendar www.vaisnavacalendar.com)

3 Mon	Fasting for Uthana Ekadasi Srla Gaura Kisora Dasa Babaji – Disappearance
4 Tue	Dvadasi break fast 5.52 – 10.17 am
6 Thu	Sri Bhugarbha Gosvami – Disappearance Sri Kasisvara Pandita – Disappearance Last day of the fourth Caturmasya month
7 Fri	Sri Krsna Rasayatra Tulasi-Saligrama Vivaha (marriage) Sri Nimbarkacarya – Appearance
8 Sat	Katyayani vrata begins
18 Tue	Fasting for Utpanna Ekadasi Sri Narahari Sarakara Thakura – Disappearance
19 Wed	Dvadasi Break fast 5.43 – 10.15 am Sri Kaliya Krsnadasa – Disappearance
20 Thu	Sri Saranga Thakura – Disappearance
28 Fri	Odana sasthi