

October 2017



THE CONCH

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

NEWSLETTER

New Govardhana Community



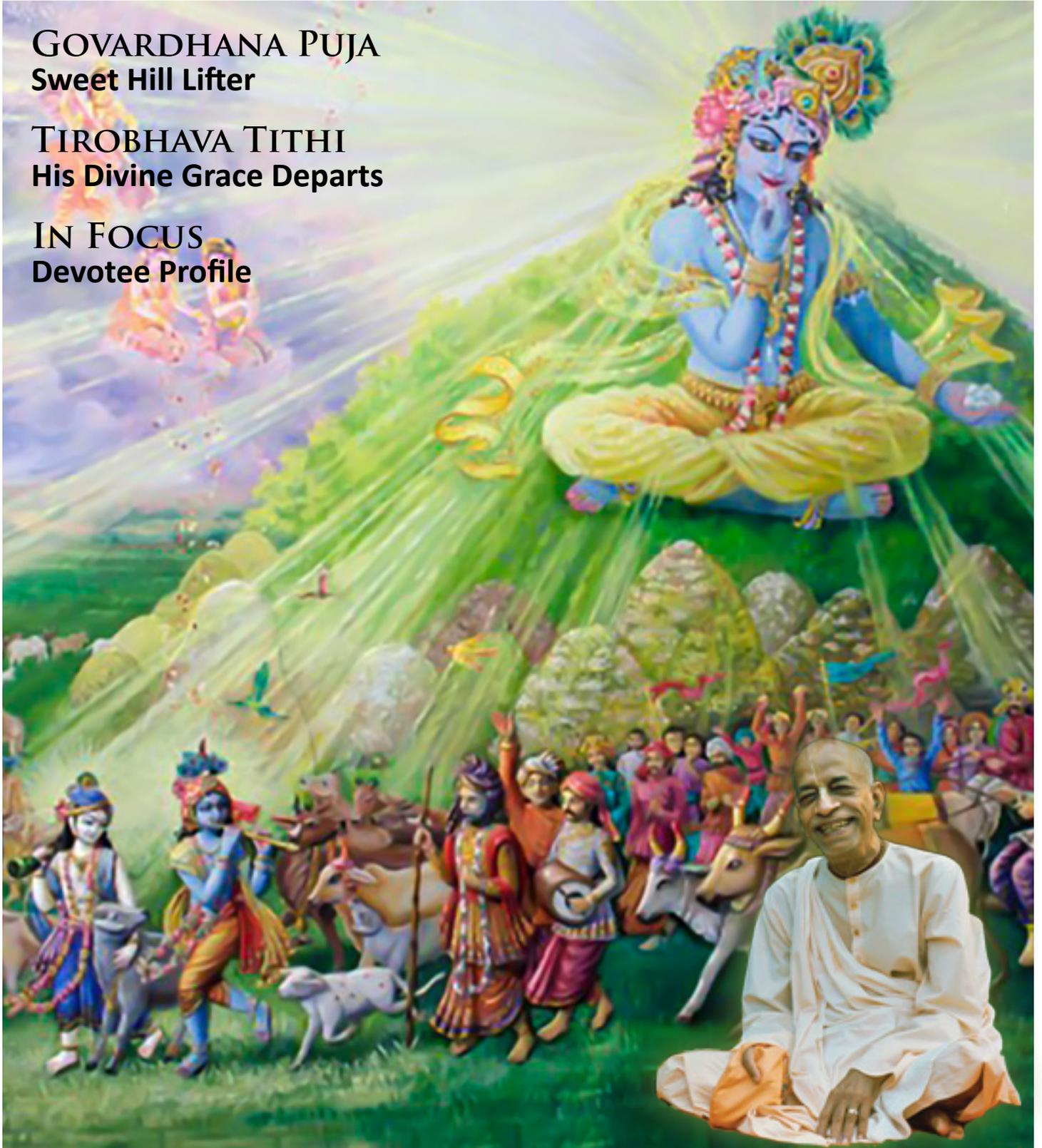
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Dedicated to His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, Founder-Acharya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

GOVARDHANA PUJA
Sweet Hill Lifter

TIROBHAVA TITHI
His Divine Grace Departs

IN FOCUS
Devotee Profile



BULLOCK REPORT + KIRTANA MELA + NEW LADIES ASHRAMA

SRILA PRABHUPADA'S DISAPPEARANCE DAY

By: His Holiness Mukunda Goswami

The departure of ISKCON's Founder-Acharya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada on 14 November 1977 is deeply engraved into each of his disciple's minds. Here His Holiness Mukunda Goswami describes when he heard the devastating news that we would no longer be able to see the transcendental form of Srila Prabhupada in this life.

It was a typically sunny morning in Los Angeles on 14 November 1977. However, something foreboding hung in the ether. Srila Prabhupada in Vrindavana in India was in his final days in this earthly body.

I resided in the New Dwaraka (LA temple) at that time.

An announcement was made for all the New Dwaraka devotees to gather in the temple room at 6.45am for an important message.

At the appointed time, I complied and sat on the cold marble floor of the temple room. The regional leader, Ramesvara dasa, sat on a cushion, about to make the unthinkable announcement. Finally, when all the

New Dwaraka devotees were present, he began by sucking air. Then we heard him. "Prabhupada", he croaked, "... is gone".

A collective gasp cut the air, followed by muted weeping.

After a few moments, I tried to regain my composure. The growing lump in my throat was defiantly disobeying its cranial command to vanish. I rose and stumbled out the front door into the glaring sunlight.

Everything looked plastic: the trees, bushes, flowers and sky. Like the city itself, home to tinsel town, also known as Hollywood, known for its illusory so-called classics, I was part of a grotesque non-reality TV show.

Later, devotees who had been at Srila Prabhupada's bedside told us that he continued translating into a dictating machine until just a few days before his departure. His lips barely moving, Srila Prabhupada defied the pain that his doctors said a person of his condition would be in, and, speaking softly into the microphone, he dictated the translations and explanations of the verses of Chapter 13, Canto 10 of his *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. At one point he turned to the devotees close to him and said, "Don't think this won't happen to you." 🙏

Please see last page for details of Srila Prabhupada's Disappearance Day commemoration at New Govardhana.



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



Photo: Facebook.com

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

Srila Prabhupada Uvaca

"So therefore we are not going to the city. We are inhabitants of this village. So it is better to worship this land, this land, this land, Govardhana." Because Krishna was herding His cows on the Govardhana Hill, so indirectly He hinted that: "We should worship this Govardhana Hill, and that is our duty."

When Krishna talked like this, then his father agreed not to perform the sacrifice. Because all the inhabitants of Vraja, Vrindavana, they are so much fond of Krishna, whatever Krishna will say, they will accept. So although Krishna was a boy, He implored his father and other elderly gentlemen present there that, "There is no need of performing this sacrifice."

As a result of this stopping, Indra became very much angry, and there were torrents of rain, incessant rain, and very vehemently. So the whole village and whole tract of land comprising the Vrajabhumi, they became overflowed. And the cows and the animals and the people became too much afflicted. So they had no other source. They approached Krishna, "Protect us. Krishna, protect us." So at that time Krishna said, "Yes, I will give you protection." So He was, although a boy of six or seven years old, He lifted that hill.

So today Krishna lifted this hill; therefore His name is Giridhari. 'Giridhari' means 'who held the hill'. 'Giri' means the hill, and 'dhari' means one who holds up. So today is the annual ceremony of ... this Govardhana-puja. So we follow that principle. Because we are devotees of Krishna, we are trying to follow His instruction.

***Govardhana Puja Lecture
New York, 4 November 1966***

REAL LIFE BEGINS

By *Manjulali devi dasi*

On Radhastami this year, His Holiness Mukunda Goswami and His Holiness Bir Krishna Goswami conducted an initiation ceremony. Mukunda Goswami gave second initiation to Sita devi dasi. Sita's parents are also disciples of Mukunda Goswami, so it was wonderful to see two generations of his disciples in their family. Her mother, Mahateja devi dasi, was also present at the yajna.

Mukunda Maharaja described initiation as the "beginning of spiritual life ... beginning of sacrificing and surrendering everything to Krishna. It's not an end, but a beginning."

Bir Krishna Goswami gave first initiation to Owen Maher who received the name Padmalocan dasa and Clare Meehan, who received the name Karuna Mayi dasi. "Our connection in the Krishna consciousness movement, regardless of who we take initiation from (and also

we should get instruction from that person), is with His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Srila Prabhupada ... I want to emphasise to devotees that they should study Srila Prabhupada's biography, specifically *Lilamrta* and other biographies," said Bir Krishna Goswami. "That will keep our movement together. We don't want to break up into different guru groups. We want to consider everyone in Krishna consciousness movement, regardless of who they are initiated by, to be our brothers and sisters or god uncles or god aunts or whatever relationships we may have.

"We are family members – we are all part of the same family. I want to caution devotees to not think of themselves as separate from other devotees. We are one group of devotees working together with the same mission, to please Prabhupada, to change the face of this mis-directed impious civilisation, as *Bhagavatam* describes."

Karuna Mayi first attended the Bhakti Centre, so we are grateful to them

for bringing another devotee to Srila Prabhupada's lotus feet.

Krishna Gana dasa also sat in on the initiation as he had received second initiation from Hridayananda Goswami some years ago, but was yet to sit in at a fire sacrifice.

We are very happy to welcome the new initiates to Srila Prabhupada's ISKCON family. 🙏

INITIATION PROCEDURES

By *Krishnarupa devi dasi (ACBSP)*

In order to avoid any confusion or last-minute rushes before first or second initiations, a document has been prepared outlining the process for those seeking initiation who are under the auspices of New Govardhana.

Please see the Temple Noticeboard for details of the initiation procedures followed here at New Govardhana.



Photo: Trevor Gore

Initiation ceremony at New Govardhana at the Radhastami festival.

NEW HOME FOR THE BRAHMACHARINIS

by Jhulan dasi

On 24 August, the *brahmacharinis* officially moved into the new *ashrama* building located down the road from the *brahmachari* building. To auspiciously inaugurate the ladies' new home, there was a fire *yajna* attended by many guests.

The U-shaped *ashrama* building has eight rooms with en-suite bathrooms, and a large but welcoming common room with kitchen. Behind the common room, an undercover laundry with internal lines has been erected. An extensive garden is also planned, which will serve to make the view even more beautiful. All the residents are happy with their new sanctuary.

"I feel this new *ashrama* design gives each one of us our personal space and at the same time helps us cultivate a culture of co-operation and responsibility towards each other in our shared space. It helps us see our weaknesses and improve ourselves so we can serve better."

– Vaishnavi dasi

"This is the most simple and practical place I have ever lived! Moving into a new *ashrama* means a lot to us. It wasn't just about upgrading facilities, but also helped make us realise how much we are depending on the mercy of Krishna and His devotees. I feel more connected to this community as a family. Also it was a shift of my Krishna consciousness. Now my focus is 'How can I share this mercy with others?'"

– Author

"The new *ashrama* has allowed us to grow in our spiritual life and devotee relationships through *kirtana*, reading groups and other activities facilitated by the new communal area. It's a beautiful area to be practising our Krishna consciousness together as a women's *ashrama*."

– Karuna Mayi dasi

"I feel very blessed with this new facility. It looks very beautiful and spiritual. I am very grateful to the devotees and to Krishna."

– Bhaktine Hyesun

"The new *ashrama* has given us the ideal supportive environment in which to develop our consciousness, both personally and as a *sanga*."

– Bhaktine Charlotte

We would like to thank all of the devotees who helped us with this new *ashrama*. Special thanks to Ajita prabhu, who made all arrangements with as much care as if it were his own house, and Mahamantra prabhu, the thoughtful builder who ensured the new quarters met all the needs of its residents.



Photo: Jhulan devi dasi

Recent fire *yajna* at the new *brahmacharini ashrama*.

THE KRISHNA PAD

By Michael Olabode

“Human life is meant for cultivation of spiritual knowledge, in eternal relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and the executive heads of all states and all planets are obliged to impart this lesson to the citizens by education, culture and devotion.”

BG 4.1 purport

'Krishna Pad', the former *brahmacharini ashrama* is a *bhakti-yoga* training place dedicated to nourishing spiritually inclined mid-to long-term residing visitors who wish to take their spiritual practice, education, depth of realisation and training to a more advanced level.

Krishna Pad strives to serve these individuals in three ways:

1. *Devotion* – exposing them to broadminded, spiritual, intelligent association, nurturing friendships through Rupa Goswami's six loving exchanges and encouraging a steady practice of *sadhana*.
2. *Education* – developing awareness, character and skills through imbibing the practice of *bhakti* by the study of the four core *bhakti-yoga* texts and supporting Vedic literatures with a variety of interactive learning styles. This will culminate in Bhakti Sastri, Bhaktivaibhava, Bhaktivedanta and Bhaktisarvabhauma graduations.
3. *Culture* – training individuals in the subtle laws of lifestyle choices, the masculine-feminine principle, devotional relationships, Vedanta psychology, Vedic leadership, nature awareness, cleanliness, time and money management in clear connection with devotional service as revealed in the books of ISKCON's Founder-Acharya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada. We hope the students will also be inspired to share the teachings of *bhakti* in an attractive and impactful way with others.

The culture of Krishna Pad will motivate individuals to wholeheartedly saturate their consciousness with transcendence in the deepest and most vibrant ways possible. I graduated in Bhaktivaibhava, and in London trained young adults for the past seven years in spiritual application. They'll be inspired to create revolutions of the hearts and minds of all those in their spheres of influence by becoming natural leaders through the carefully applied spiritual training they will receive.

We now have nine guests staying at the Krishna Pad and the group has started studying *Nectar of Instruction* and the prayers of the Vaishnava *Acharyas*. This will be followed with a study of *Bhagavad-gita As It Is*, *Nectar of Devotion*, *Sri Isopanisad*, *Srimad-Bhagavatam* and *Manu-samhita* with evening readings of *Krishna Book* and later *Mahabharata*.

If you'd like to donate books, other items or have service related enquiries, please specifically contact Vasustrestha dasa, Clarissa or myself at thesacredinsight@gmail.com.

BULLOCK BOULEVARD

By Krsna Kirtana dasa

People have forgotten or may have never even known what bullocks are capable of doing.

While bullocks are still commonly used in most developing countries, in the West they are mostly forgotten. Interestingly, Australia's last full-time professional bullockies only retired from the forest in the early 2000s. Bullock teams were renowned for their steady, patient and determined ability to pull in difficult situations. Most of the houses in downtown Murwillumbah were built by timber hauled by bullocks. In India, until the tractor was introduced bullocks were the engine of the thriving ageless village culture.

Here at New Govardhana we are trying to revive this lost art. We've now established a bullock training school for all newly born bulls on the farm. We also have a bunch of old fellows training up. All up, 15 or so have been through the program. It's a challenge as we live in a 'I want it now society', so people have lost patience and 'faster is better'.

Bullocks are peaceful, eat grass, produce fertiliser and can work in



Photo: Courtesy Krsna Kirtana dasa

Bullock teams were renowned for their steady, patient and determined ability to pull in difficult situations.

a variety of ways. Our hope is to slowly reintroduce bullocks into the New Govardhana lifestyle and help re-establish the wonders of cow protection. Cow protection becomes complete when the bullocks are engaged.

Want to get involved? We're down at the bullock yards every day straight after breakfast or look out for us at Govardhana Puja.

For more details, contact Krsna Kirtana on 0428 727627 or kkdasa@bigpond.net.au.



Photo: Nitai Candra dasa

Krsna Kirtana dasa training Rama and Bala to pull a cart.

GRAIN CEREMONY

By Krishnarupa devi dasi (ACBSP)

On 3 September at New Govardhana, Ayu and Chiara's daughter Naia Ganga celebrated a milestone in her young life – the *annaprasana* or grain-giving ceremony.

Fans of the adorable Naia gathered in the temple for *kirtana* and the fire *yajna*. Naia relished as much sweet rice as she could and also happily tried to eat the Laxmi she had quickly grabbed as the grand finale of the ceremony. Delicious *prasadam* was served afterwards.

Congratulations to the young family! May Krishna fill your lives with blessings.



Photo: Radha Ickrath

Ayu Morgan and Chiara Summer celebrate the annaprasana ceremony of their daughter Naia Ganga. This ceremony marks the time of the child taking her first grains.

SPEED LIMITS ON THE FARM



Many drivers on the farm's roads are speeding. This is dangerous both for pedestrians and our resident animals.

Until further notice, please do not exceed the 20km speed limit in **all areas** once you enter the property, including crossing the bridge. This helps ensure the safety of others as well as the longevity of the bridge and the roads. (Bullocks are often walking on the road as well as the many residents walking up to the temple.)

TYALGUM HEARS THE HOLY NAME

By Clarissa Pollack

Melodic sounds of the Hare Krishna *maha-mantra* filled the air at the O'Heart Festival in Tyalgum last month as *kirtaneers* from New Govardhana took to the stage.

International musicians and music lovers coalesced in the nature-filled space to share music, hear inspiring lectures and seminars, and enjoy the sunny weather at the family friendly outdoor festival.

In addition to being invited to share *kirtana*, Suratanath dasa and Bhakta Mark had also prepared and served *prasadam* to hungry festival-goers.

I led a sound meditation workshop using ancient Sanskrit *beeja mantras*. The friendly Tyalgum community also welcomed yoga classes and other musical acts from members of the greater New Govardhana farm community.

The O'Heart Festival successfully raised funds in support of victims from the devastating Cyclone Debbie flood in March this year.



Photo: David Klinberg

New Govardhana devotees at the recent Tyalgum O'Heart Festival.

NEW GOVARDHANA KIRTANA MELA

By Jhulan dasi

On 9 September, from 4pm–9pm, New Govardhana celebrated its third Kirtana Mela program – a monthly *kirtana* festival held in the temple. Most of the *kirtaneers* were community residents who hadn't led *kirtana* before or hadn't done so for a long time. A delicious feast followed, cooked by Padmalocan dasa, with the dessert prepared by Bhaktine Hyesun.

One of the attendees, Ekadasi devi dasi, says, "The feeling and sincerity, along with the heart wanting to please Radharani and Krishna, was a very powerful experience. And all the devotees who came along to chant the holy name left everyone with a beautiful memory."

"It was wonderful to see and hear so many different devotees of Sri Sri Radha Govardhanadhari gather together to sing Their holy names with such feeling and sincerity. There is so much talent and devotional energy in this community," says musician Deva Gaura Hari dasa.

Sri Gandharvika devi dasi says, "It is very inspiring to see and be part of the *mela*. Hopefully this event will lead to many more. Many thanks to all the devotees making this *mela* a reality and for all of those who participated."

Next Kirtana Mela will be held on 7 October. For enquiries, please contact Jhulan dasi 0404 242 694.



Photo: Jhulan devi dasi

Srinivasa dasa leading the chanting at the recent Kirtana Mela.

HEAR YE, HEAR YE

By Shanti Parayana dasa

We have the finest philosophy encapsulated in the *bhakti sastras*. A systematic study course therefore refreshes your wisdom and puts the subtle truths of Gaudiya Vaisnavism into practical perspective.

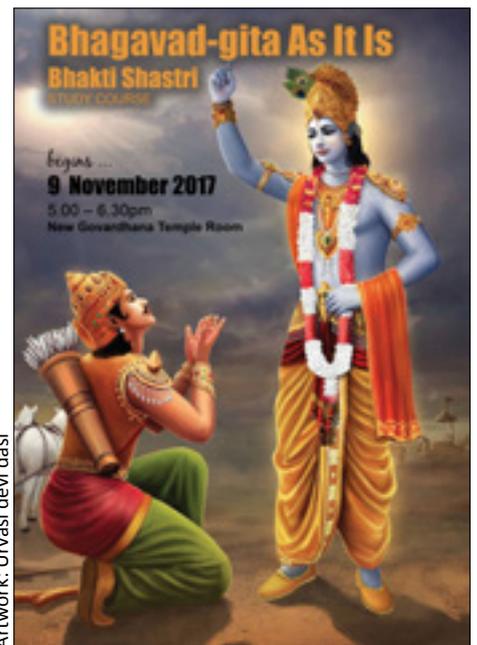
Now at New Govardhana you can gain credits towards an ISKCON recognised Bhakti Sastri degree course, which is valuable for devotees aspiring to progress in their commitment to devotional service.

Where: Temple room

When: Starting 9 November, 5pm to 6.30pm

Each Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday.

For registration, please email Shanti Parayana dasa: shantipa55@hotmail.com



Artwork: Urvashi devi dasi

DONATIONS WANTED

Any donations of furniture or household goods in good condition would be very much appreciated for the new ladies' *ashrama*.

Items such as cooking pots, cushions, a coffee table and chairs etc., in particular are needed.

Please contact Jhulan dasi 0404 242 694 before contributing.

IN FOCUS: PRANA DASA

By *Kisori devi dasi*

Originally from Melbourne, Prana dasa's chosen career path as an educator has taken him to many countries. He taught at New Nandagram *gurukula* in rural Victoria as a qualified teacher for seven years before obtaining a Masters Degree in Education. He then spent a year at New Goloka in the US, developing an integrated curriculum for international use in *gurukulas*.

Following this was a stint in India from 1998 to 2000 where he facilitated the Bhakti Sastri course at both the Vrindavana Institute for Higher Education (VIHE) and the Mayapur Institute for Higher Education (MIHE).

Upon returning to Melbourne in 2000, Prana was ready to begin teaching at a local private school, but the Auckland New Varshana *gurukula* had an opening for the position of Principal, which he accepted instead.

The next 13 years were spent doing intensive work as the Principal and teacher there – building up the student roll from six students to over a hundred, to improving the infrastructure with OH&S standards and developing the curriculum.

In 2013, Prana decided to focus on developing Krishna conscious educational resources and retired from full-time work at New Varshana. He continued to work as a mentor for school leaders locally in New Zealand and overseas, in countries including Phillipines, China, India, US, Indonesia and Australia.

He also spent some time in 2014 at the Bhaktivedanta College in Belgium, where he taught some modules for the Teacher Education Degree course,



Photo: Courtesy Prana dasa

Prana dasa and Candrakoti devi dasi in Vrindavana, India.

which was affiliated with the Chester University in the UK.

Then followed seven months as the Principal of the Krishna Avanti *gurukula* in the UK in 2015.

Prana had been thinking for some time about doing secondary school work, and when an opportunity became available at the Bhaktivedanta Swami Gurukula at New Govardhana, he decided to take it.

His roles here include being the Vice Principal, setting up systems for performance management and teacher professional development, overseeing professional mentoring and possibly some teaching at the secondary school.

Outside of the *gurukula*, Prana intends to deliver *Srimad-Bhagavatam* discourses at the temple, perform *pujari* work and contribute towards teaching at the Krishna Village.

His wife, Candrakoti devi dasi, is joining him here at New Govardhana sometime this month. She is an expert *pujari* and cook, with her milk sweets known as being in the sublime category.

The New Govardhana community and Bhaktivedhanta Swami Gurukula wholeheartedly welcomes Prana and Candrakoti. 🙏

THE MONTH OF KARTIK

By *Shanti Parayana dasa*

The month of Kartik is especially auspicious. This splendid month runs from 6 October to 4 November this year.

During Kartik, Srimati Radharani, who is the presiding Deity of this month (known as Kartika Devi), is pleased by devotees serving the Lord of Her heart – Damodara.

According to the *Hari-bhakti-vilasa*, the month of Kartik bestows upon us inexhaustible benefits. During this period, devotees generally demonstrate their sincerity by observing different *vratas* (vows) on a daily basis. In particular, ISKCON's Founder-Acharya, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada encouraged all the devotees around the world to execute the Damodara *vrata* by offering a light to the Lord each morning or evening.

Therefore, everyone is welcome to Radha Govardhanadhari's temple to express their devotional sentiments by singing the divine prayer revealed to Satyavrata Muni, *Sri Damodarastakam*, as they offer lamps to Lord Damodara.

“Perfectly composed and fully saturated with moods of loving devotion, *Sri Damodarastakam* pleases Lord Damodara and quickly draws Him into the presence of the ardent admirer” (*Sri Damodara-Janani*. SRS)

Devotees can also take different vows, such as extra *japa*, increased reading, going on more *hari-namas*, *prasadam* and book distribution, offering charity and serving Lord Krishna's cows, worshiping *tulasi*, visiting the holy places or remembering Vrindavana and reciting prayers. 🙏



EDITORIAL BOARD:

Krishnarupa devi dasi (ACBSP), Manjulali devi dasi, Kisori devi dasi.

LAYOUT AND GRAPHIC DESIGN:

Urvashi devi dasi and Jhulan dasi.

FOR ENQUIRIES, COMMENTS OR SUGGESTIONS
Contact: www.conch.org.au

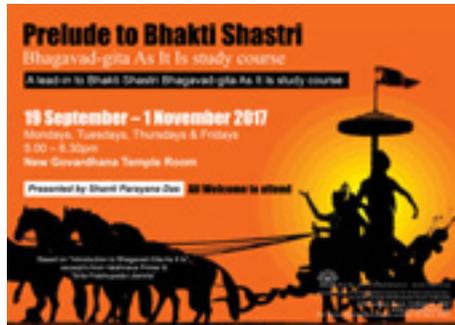
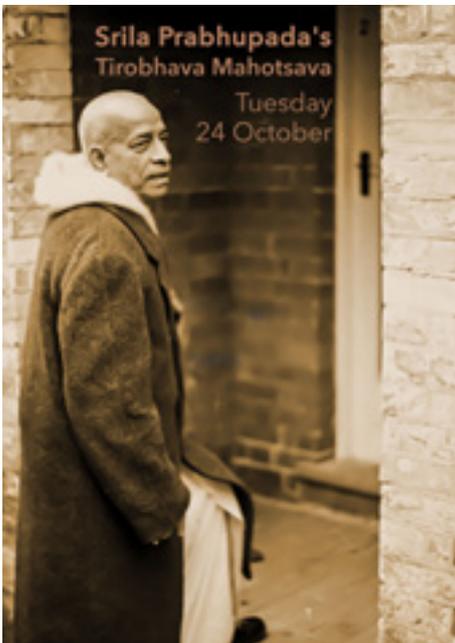
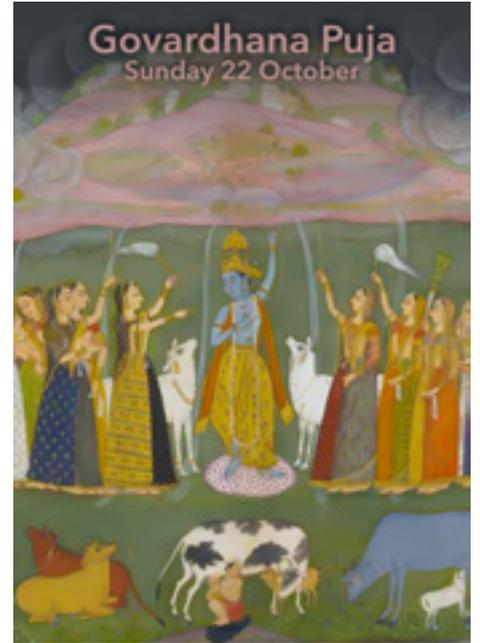
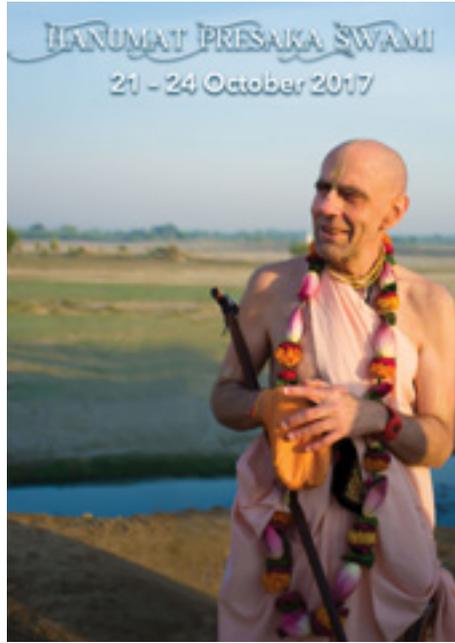
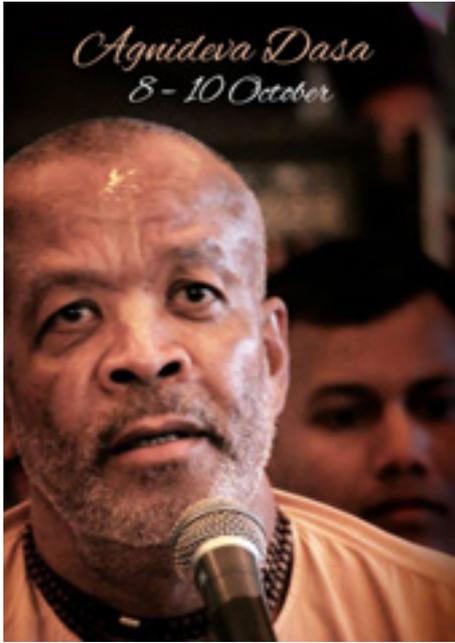
SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

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 caroleditor@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 will be edited, proofread and may be rejected without notice.

UPCOMING EVENTS



For events, festivals and visiting vaishnava schedule details, please go to New Govardhana's Facebook page: www.facebook.com/iskconnewgovardhana and website: www.krishnafarm.net.

DAYLIGHT SAVING STARTS

Daylight saving commences Sunday, 1 October, so please turn your clocks forward one hour before taking rest on Saturday 30 September.

The Sunday Feast will begin at 4pm from 1 October.

OCTOBER CALENDAR

(from Vaishnava calendar www.vaishnavacalendar.com)

- 1 Sun First day of daylight saving
- 2 Mon Ekadasi: Fasting for Pasankusa Ekadasi
- 3 Tue Dvadasi: Break Fast 6:23am – 8:40am
Raghunatha Dasa Gosvami, Raghunatha Bhatta Gosvami, Krsnadasa Kaviraja Gosvami – Disappearance
- 5 Thu Last day of 3rd month of Caturmasya
- 6 Fri 4th month Caturmasya (fasting from urad dahl), Start of Damodara
- 10 Tue Narottama Dasa Thakura – Disappearance
- 13 Fri Radha Kunda – Appearance
- 16 Mon Ekadasi: Fasting for Rama Ekadasi
- 17 Tue Trayodasi: Break Fast 6:08am – 10:24am
- 21 Sat Govardhana Puja
- 22 Sun Govardhana Puja (observed today)
- 24 Tue Srila Prabhupada – Disappearance
- 28 Sat Gadadhara Dasa Gosvami – Disappearance
Srinivasa Acarya – Disappearance
- 31 Tue Ekadasi: Fasting for Utthana Ekadasi
Gaura Kisora Dasa Babaji—Disappearance

HARINAMA SANKIRTANA KI JAYA!



Photo: Trevor Gore

Daily at various locations
Contact **Garuda dasa** for details
garuda108das@hotmail.com

Sunday Mornings
Northern NSW & Gold Coast
Visnujana dasa 0498 141 021