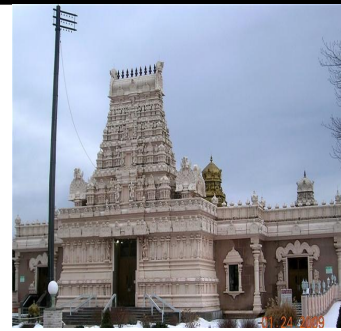




VISWA VANI

The Newsletter of the
Hindu Temple & Cultural Society of USA Inc.
Sri Venkateswara Temple (Balaji Mandir) & Community Center
(Non-Profit Tax-Exempt Organization)
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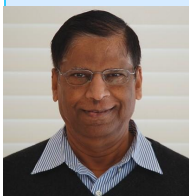


Volume 12 Issue 1

January 2012



2012 Happy New Year



Chairman's Report

Dear Devotees,

Namaskaram. As this will be the last issue of Viswa Vani in 2011, please allow me to ruminate on how this year progressed and our vision for 2012 and beyond.

The crowning achievement of the year was the successful completion of Mahakumbhabhishekam celebrations in the month of June. This was not only a momentous occasion in the Temple's history, but also an accomplishment for the new Board of Trustees and officers, who assumed responsibilities at the beginning of the year. This event was immediately followed by the successful staging of Indo-American Festival (IAF) in July. Even though they lacked sufficient time and resources to prepare for it, the IAF team rose to the challenge and successfully staged this event off-site.

We celebrated a number of religious events during the year with special services and cultural activities, the details of which have been communicated to you in the past issues of Viswa Vani. This quarter, we celebrated Devi Navaratri, Vijaya Dasami and Sri Venkateswara Jayanthi. During Devi Navaratri, we staged traditional Garba as well as celebrated Batakamma festival, which has a tremendous significance to a large segment of our devotees. In October, we celebrated Naraka Chaturdasi and Deepavali. We also commemorated Gujarati New Year in October. The fact that all these events were well-attended is a testament to the religious spirit of our patrons and the important role that your Temple plays in fulfilling its religious mission.

This year, we strived to offer more cultural opportunities for the community to come together, particularly our children. Our Cultural Committee celebrated Children's Day, which was a rousing success with more than five hundred attendees. We also had occasions such as Bhajan Mala in early December, which was well-attended by children of all ages. This level of participation and enthusiasm is gratifying for us to see. In the coming years, we will not only try to maximize the opportunities in the Temple for these types of events, but will strive to expand the reach of these events as well. The new Cultural Center, which is on the drawing board, gives us the proper venue to enable us to do so.

The new Board of Trustees and officers, after assuming their responsibilities in January, instituted procedures to ensure that the projects in planning were, in fact, reflective of the needs and desires of the community. This has been a deliberative process and we are putting the final touches on revisions to the designs. While going through this process, we also managed to complete two major construction projects in 2011. The first one is Phase 1 of Infrastructure Improvements, which allowed us to expand, among others, available on-site parking. The second is Priests' Quarters. We expected our priests to move in to the new housing units in October, but this got delayed for a number of reasons. We are completing this in December, which we are all excited about. Our archakas are the most committed in the Lord's service and they make sacrifices to fulfill that mission. We are proud and obliged to be able to offer these modern, furnished accommodations to them.

Design revisions to the Temple Addition and the Cultural Center projects are almost complete and we hope to complete the designs and go for competitive bidding by the Spring 2012. We will keep you posted as we make progress on these projects. Successful completion of these projects require dedicated effort by volunteer committee members and generous support by our patrons. We staged an annual dinner in December, which raised about \$75,000. The Temple needs your support now, more than ever, to be able to successfully complete these projects. When you visit your Temple the next time, please inquire about contributing towards this lasting legacy that you and your family can be proud of.

While we look forward to an exciting and fulfilling 2012 in the service of the Lord, let me thank and congratulate our volunteers, priests, office staff, committee chairs and officers for their steadfast dedication. The volunteer members of our Food Committee have done a yeoman's job throughout the year and I thank them from the bottom of my heart for their dedication and commitment.

Finally, preparations are underway for New Year celebrations. We are arranging off-site parking at Sanofi-Aventis with shuttle buses to the Temple complex. There will be heated tents and security by the police. I welcome you to participate in the festivities and receive the blessings of Lord Sri Venkateswara from Sameepa Darshanam.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees and the officers of the Temple, I thank you for your patronage and promise you that we will continue to strive to be humble in service to you and to the Almighty Lord.

May The Lord Sri Venkateswara Shower you and your family with Blessings for a rewarding New year.

Sincerely,

Yugandhara Rao Vallabhaneni

Chairman, HTCS Board of Trustees

Navaratri Celebration

Devi Navaratri was celebrated in our Temple from Tuesday, Sep 27th to Thursday, Oct 6, 2011. Apart from the daily abhishekam to Sri Parvati, special Devi alankarams were done on each day. The traditional kolu was beautifully done. About 100 + kids participated in the Vidyarambhams pujas on Vijaya Dasami day. A large number of devotees participated in all the pujas, including the Vijaya Dasami and Sri Venkateswara Jayanti on Oct 6th, 2011.



HTCS organized a variety of cultural programs on the occasion of Navaratri. These included Carnatic vocal recitals, violin recitals, Garba dance accompanied by live music and several dance performance.

Deepavali Celebrations

Deepavali or Diwali, the Festival of Lights, was celebrated on Tuesday, Oct 25, 2011. Dhanalakshmi alankaram and Dhanalakshmi pujas were the highlights of the celebration. Sahasranama kumkumarchana with Dollar coins to Sri Maha Lakshmi and Gold coin mala adorned by Sri Venkateswara Swamy.

Cafeteria

HTCS Cafeteria Winter Hours : Cafeteria will be closed on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

HTCS cafeteria looking for volunteers, If you are interested Please leave your names in the cafeteria

HTCS : LOOKING FOR PART TIME CASHIERS. Please forward your resume to yrvalla@yahoo.com

Community Affairs

Soup Kitchen Dates @ Ozanam Shelter, 89 Truman Drive, Edison.

Sunday, **January 8, 2012**

Sponsor/Coordinator: **Daksha Parekh Ph. (908)369-3301**
E-mail: theparekhs@comcast.net

Sunday, **February 12, 2012**

Sponsor/Coordinator: **Radha Ananthkrishnan Ph. (732)548-5584**
E-mail: akrishna@optonline.net

Food Drive: Please contribute generously to the Temple Food Drive. Containers are located near the gift shop and the main office.

For more information, contact **Bharati Penupatruni**, Chairperson, Community Affairs at (732) 329-4135 or email adidev@juno.com

Chandi Homam

Concluding part of the Navarathri celebrations, Chandi Homam was performed on Sunday, Oct. 9th, 2011.

Chandi is a very fierce and powerful deity - She is the primordial energy that is responsible for the creation, sustenance and destruction of this entire universe.

She is the sum total of the energies of all beings of this universe. By performing the Maha Chandi Homa, one can become free of evil eyes, curses, obstacles and they are also blessed with a lasting health, wealth and prosperity.

The core of the ceremony involves a recitation of the Durga Saptashati. These are 700 secret and powerful mantras in praise of Goddess Durga in which she defeats various demons. With the recitation of each verse, offerings are made in the sacrificial fire invoking the Goddess.

Skandha Sashti Festival

Skandha Sashti Festival was celebrated on Monday, Oct 31st, 2011.

The festival of Skandha Sashti Viratham lasts for six days, starting with the day following the new moon in the month of Aswin, and is extremely important for devotees. The Sashti falling in on the waxing moon period in the Hindu lunar month of Aippasi or Aswin (October-November) is the day on which Lord Muruga is believed to have killed a



super-demon called Sura Padman. This is commemorated in the six-day festival of Skandha Sashti as a symbol of perpetual destruction of evil by God. Each of these six days is, by custom, set apart to recite the glory of Lord Muruga from one of the six scriptures in His praise.

Maha Kumbhabhishekham Souvenirs

Maha Kumbhabhishekham souvenirs are ready for pick up in the office. HTCS members, please pick your copy. Sorry for the delay

Viswa Vani is the newsletter of Sri Venkateswara Temple (Balaji Mandir) & Community Center, and is published by the Hindu Temple & Cultural Society of USA Inc., 1075 US Hwy 202/206, Bridgewater, NJ 08807 – a Non-Profit Tax-Exempt Organization.

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Email: newsletter@venkateswara.org

तानि सर्वाणि संयम्य युक्त आसीत् मत्परः । तानि सर्वानि संयम्या युक्ता ंसिता मत्-पराह
वशे हि यस्येन्द्रियाणि तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥ ६१ ॥ वाशे हि यस्येन्द्रियाणि तस्या प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता

Children's Day Celebration

Hindu Temple and Cultural Society, Sri Venkateswara Temple NJ has been conducting Children's Day Celebrations for the past 15 years in NJ. This year the Cultural Committee brought new awareness in community adding much definition and structure to the program. A total of over 250 children participated in the children's day program and over 88 items were performed on the stage. Elocution Competitions were introduced for Middle school & high school students and there was much enthusiasm and participation from school children. ART Gallery was a new introduction this year which was very impressive and extremely well received by all attendees. Children brought their art work & paintings for display which reflected amazing talent in our children. Group dances were performed for both Classical & folk. There was NO language barrier. Children chanted verses from Vedas, Vishnu Sahasranamam as well as Lingashtakam & Achyuthashtakam flawlessly. Several children participated in solo and group singing Slokas - Bhajans - Devotional songs. Instrumental music using key board, guitar, Flute & violin was also very relaxing listening to Vandemaatharam & Raghupathi Raghava Rajaram. About 20 children participated in Fancy dress (new item) including a set of Triplets in Village Costumes. 'Erukalsani' was a hit (Kannada girl did Telugu version) 'Hanuman' was very cute & received applaud. Most young parents appreciated and thanked Temple for creating a platform for their children. There were NO modern film dances or rock music items which is a noteworthy point for future programs.

BHAJAN MALA program

The Cultural Committee conducted the Bhajan mala program at the Venkateswara Temple on December 10th 2011. The program was planned and staged in 20 days with overwhelming response. Over 150 children between the ages of 6yrs-16yrs participated in this event.

Bhajan Mala is a NEW introduction to the Temple's annual events this year. The program was created mainly to expose and encourage many children learning Stothrams, Ashtakams & Bhajans with an idea for the other children to watch them & get motivated. Only Temples can create a platform for the youth & give positive reinforcement for Vedic Chants. Bhajan Mala was the first of its kind in the Tristate area - extremely appreciated by the parents.

Program started with Purusha Sooktham followed by Narayana Sooktham (boys ages 11-14 yrs). Lingashtakam, Ganesh Pancharatnam, Suddha Brahma, Madhurashtakam, Mahishasura Mardini Rama Bhajans were among the items covered. Program ended with Bhaja Givindam by children.

'Datta group; participated with Datta Bhajans,' Sai group' participated with Sai Bhajans, 'Ayyappa group' participated with Ayyappa bhajans - 'Chimaya group' participated with Krishna bhajans - first time ever on one stage bringing unity among the diversity in Hinduism believers.

Up coming Events — January and February 2012

December 31, 2011 Sat

New Year's Eve

5.00 am Suprabhatam
5.30 am Dhanurmasa Puja
9.00 am Sri Lakshmi Ganapati Ekavimsati Modaka Homam,
Sudarsana Homam, Sri Mahalakshmi Homam,
With Sri Suktam And Suvarna Gharma Suktam
10.00 pm Bhajans And Veda Parayanam Till Midnight

January 1, 2012 Sun

New Year's Day

5.00 am Suprabhatam
5.30 am Dhanurmasa Puja
6.00 am Sarva Devata Homam
7.30 am Abhishekam To All Deities
Sri Venkateswara, Sridevi, Bhudevi Sri Siva, Parvati, Sri
Maha Ganapati Sri Subrahmanya Swamy, Sri Ayyappa
Swamy, Sri Rama, Sri Krishna, Sri Satyanarayana
Swamy, Saraswati, Navagrahas, Puja, Harati,
Mantrapushpam, Prasadam
12.00 noon Auction of Devata Vastrams
1.00 pm Auction of Jewelry

**Devotees will be allowed to enter the Mukha Mantapam to get
the Sameepa Darsanam of Sri Venkateswara after the
Abhishekam.**

January 4, 2012 Wed

Vaikuntha Ekadasi

Dhanurmasa Sukla Paksha Ekadasi

5.00 am Suprabhatam
5.30 am Thiruppalliyezuchi, Thiruppavai, Thiruvempavai
7.00 am Vaikuntha Dwara Darsanam
Sri Venkateswara Gadyam

10.00 am Sri Venkateswara Abhishekam

Sri Krishna Abhishekam Kavacha
Alankaram Sahasranama Archana

6.30 pm Bhagavadgeeta Parayanam

7.00 pm Sri Satyanarayana Swamy Vratam (Pooja)

**Temple will be open Till Midnight. Devotees Will Be Allowed
To Enter Mukha Mantapam to get the Sameepa Darsanam of
Lord Sri Venkateswara after Abhishekam**

January 8, 2012 Sun

Arudra Darsanam, Nataraja Abhishekam

5.00 am Suprabhatam
5.30 am Thiruppalliyezuchi, Thiruppavai
6.00 am Mahanyasa Poorvaka Rudrabhishekam to Nataraja Swamy,
Thiruvempavai Puja Harati, Mantrapushpam, Prasadam

January 13, 2012 Fri

Bhogi, Goda Kalyanam

6.30 pm Goda Kalyanam

January 14, 2012 Sat

Makara Sankramanam, Makara Sankranti, Uttarayana Punyakalam, Pongal

9.30 am Aruna Prasna Parayanam
10.30 am Navagraha Abhishekam Special Puja to Sri Suryanarayana
Bhagavan

January 27, 2012 Fri

Vasanta Panchami

7.00 pm Sri Saraswati Abhishekam Puja, Harati, Mantrapushpam
Prasadam

January 30, 2012 Mon

Ratha Saptami

10.00 am Navagraha Abhishekam Special Puja to
Sri Suryanarayana Bhagavan

Keep under the control all senses, the self controlled should meditate on Me; since for one whose senses have been brought under control is established in perfect knowledge

Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, Verse 61

Up coming Events — January and February 2012 (Cont..)

February 1, 2012 Wed

Madhwa Navami

9.00 am Pavamana Homam
 10.30 am Sri Krishna AbhishekamPuja, Harati, Mantrapushpam, Prasadam

February 3, 2012 Fri

Bheeshma Ekadasi

10.30 am Sri Krishna Abhishekam, Vishnu Sahasranama Stotra Parayanam Puja, Harati, Mantrapushpam, Prasadam
 7.00 pm Sri Satyanarayana Swamy Puja

February 6, 2012 Mon

Thai Poosam

7.00 pm Sri Subrahmanya Swamy Abhishekam Puja, Harati, Mantrapushpam, Prasadam

February 7, 2012 Tue

Maha Maghi

Magha Poornima

February 17, 2012 Fri

Temple Anniversary Day

9.00 am Sarva Devata Homam
 10.00 am Sri Venkateswara Swamy Abhishekam Puja, Harati, Mantrapushpam, Prasadam

February 18, 2012 Sat

Temple Anniversary Day Celebrations

9.00 am Sarva Devata Homam
 10.30 am Sri Venkateswara Swamy Abhishekam Kavacha Alankaram Puja, Harati, Mantrapushpam Prasadam

February 19, 2012 Sun

Maha Sivaratri

Temple is open Whole Day And Night

9.00 am Sri Maha Ganapati Homam
 Rudra Homam
 10.30 am Sri Siva Abhishekam
 Parvati Abhishekam
Phase 1 Abhishekam In The Evening
 5.30 pm Mahanyasa Parayanam
 6.30 pm Sri Siva Abhishekam
 Rudra Trisati Nama Archana Harati, Mantrapushpam
Phase 2 Abhishekam In The Evening
 10.30 pm Sri Siva Abhishekam
 Bilva Ashtottara Sata Nama Archana
 Harati, Mantrapushpam

February 20, 2012 Mon

Phase 3 Abhishekam After Midnight of Sunday

1.00 am Sri Siva Abhishekam
 Siva Sahasra Nama Archana
 Harati, Mantrapushpam
 Phase 4 Abhishekam In The Early Hours of Monday
 3.00 am Sri Siva Abhishekam
 Nandeewara Abhishekam
 Siva Ashtottara Sata Nama Archana
 Lalita Sahasra Nama Puja To Parvati
 Harati, Mantrapushpam, Prasadam

February 26, 2012 Sun

Maha Sivaratri Celebration

4.30 pm Siva Parvati Kalyanam

Directions →

From PA & S. Jersey: Take US 1 N or NJ TP N to exit 10 to 287 N to Rt.22 (exit 14B). After about 3 miles, take 202/206 N (Morristown). Continue on 202/206 N to Pluckemin (about 1.6miles). Pass Sanofi-Aventis Pharmaceuticals on your left (approx. 3 miles). Turn left at the Brown Rd. light into the Temple grounds.
From NY City: Take GW Bridge or Lincoln/Holland Tunnel to NJ Turnpike South. Take exit 14 to 78W. Take exit 29 to 287 N. On 287 N, take exit 22A for Rt.202/206 S. Pass 5 lights (abt. 3 miles) and pass Old Farm Road. Turn right at the Brown Road light (6th light) into the Temple grounds.
From Rt. 80: Take 287S to exit 22 (Pluckemin); keep right and immediately follow jug handle U turn to 202/206 S. Pass 6 lights (abt. 3 miles) and pass Old Farm Road. Turn right at the Brown Road light (7th light) into the Temple grounds.

Temple Hours

Weekdays: 8:30am to 11:30am
 4:30 pm to 8:30 pm
 Weekends, National Holidays and Festivals: 8:30 am to 8:30 pm



Current Resident or



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