

**HAPPY DEEPAVALI  
AND PROSPEROUS  
NEW YEAR**



# DEEPAM

**Volume 26, Deepavali Special Issue 1  
October 2017**



**Hindu Temple**

**13010 Arbor Street, Omaha, NE, 68144**

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# Deepavali Celebrations 2017



**October 28, 2017**  
Hindu Temple Social Hall

Cultural Programs: 3.00pm to 6.30pm

Raffle: 6.30pm to 7.00pm

Dinner: 7.00pm onwards

Dinner Sponsored by **Telugu Samiti of Nebraska**

**Raffle Ticket: \$ 10 only**

## **Raffle Prizes**

Ist Prize: **\$ 1000 in cash**

IIInd Prize: **55" LG 4K UHD Smart LED TV (\$750)**

IIIrd Prize: **Canon Rebel EOS T6**

**DSLR Camera Lens bag bundle (\$550)**

IVth Prize(2 each): **Amazon Echo (\$180)**

Vth Prize(4each): **\$100 Grocery**

VIth Prize:(5 each): **\$50 Indian Restaurant Gift Card**

VIIth Prize(7 each): **\$25 Indian Restaurant Gift Card**

VIIIth Prize(10 each): **\$15 Movie Gift Card**



Raffle Contact:

Rakesh Singh- 402 321 2247

Deepa Kashyap- 402 932 7395

Shantaram Joshi- 402 965 9777

Alekha Dash- 402 492 9707

Anil Bhalla- 402 333 6607

Chandrasekhar- 402 812 5654

Srikanth Jangala(Lincoln)- 616706 9529

Celebrations Contact:

Keerthi Ranjith- 402 319 8868

cultural@htom.us

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# Deepavali Celebrations 2017



Wednesday  
**October 18, 2017**

6:30 PM DhanaLaxmi Pooja  
7:00 PM Community Laxmi Archana  
7:30 PM Ganesha Aarati  
7:45 PM Fireworks

htom.puja@gmail.com  
402 697 8546





## COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Priest: **Pandit Nagabhat Vidyashankar**  
**Pandit Damodara Bhattar**  
**Pandit Laxmikant (Amol) Kulkarni**  
Sevak: **Chandrasekhar Karmegam**

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Vice President: **Sayi Repakula**  
Secretary: **Srinivas Mallipudi**  
Asst. Secretary: **Lakshmi Pillai**  
Treasurer: **Gopi Krishna**  
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Member (16-18): **Raj Natarajan**  
Member (16-18): **Smita Dash**  
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Member (17-19): **Gayatri Ram**  
Member (17-19): **Srikant Jangala**  
Past President: **Muralidhar Chintapalli**

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Education: **Vandana Singh**  
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Mahaprasad: **Surendra Khandavalli &**  
**Kantharaj Etigi**  
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IT Management: **Kameswara Rao Myneni**



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Nomination: **Murali Chintapalli**  
Vedantic Center of Nebraska: **Phani Tej Adidam &**  
**Sanjay Singh**  
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Member (16-18): **Gowridhar Madhu**  
Fund Raising: **Alekha Dash**  
Long Range Planning: **Shashi Bhatia**  
Past Chairperson: **Sriram Ravipati**

# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Patrons and Devotees,

Aum Shree Ganeshaya Namah!

Namaskara,

As President of the Hindu Temple, Omaha, NE, it is an honor to be writing on behalf of the Executive Committee for the year 2017-18.

We are very happy that this Deepam is being published to celebrate Deepavali, festival of lights, signifying victory of light over darkness or good over evil. May the beauty of Deepavali fill your home with happiness and the coming year provide you with everything that brings you joy.



Since July, we have observed festivals like Ganesh Chaturthi, Janmastami, Navaratri and Deepavali, to name a few. Thanks to our priests, for their outstanding dedication and commitments, all these events were successful. Our Executive Committee is determined to work diligently with the members of our community towards greater achievement and better understanding, to work harder, to improve the relationship and service to the community. Our Hindu Community is blessed to have Volunteers/ Devotees/Leaders who are committed and dedicated in serving our temple. We are indeed blessed to be a part of this community.

Since its inception in 1993, Hindu Temple has come a long way in serving the spiritual needs of the Hindu Community in and around Omaha (and beyond) for the past two decades. We are ever grateful for the volunteers, devotees, patrons who worked, committed, served so hard in building our Hindu Temple for us that we could come and worship in the peaceful, serene and tranquil environment.

Our Hindu Community is growing by leaps and bounds, thanks to Lord Prasanna Ganapati, so much so that we are running out of space to fulfill our community's needs! I am proud to say our Hindu Temple is growing along with it to meet the demands. As part of our expansion plans; to help us in spiritual wants, we are pleased to announce that the construction of the Sai Baba Sanctum will be commencing soon with the blessings of Prasanna Ganapati and Shiridi Sai Baba. To help us in advancement of our understanding of spiritual needs, we are also buying the building opposite our temple to expand the spiritual, educational and cultural activities. Dr. Shashi Bhatia, our Long Range Committee chair is working with Slosburg in acquiring the property for us. I kindly request all the devotees to support our temple with generous donations. We will have a Fundraising Dinner hosted by Dr. Dash and Dr. Ram Bishu, our Fundraising Chairs, on November 5<sup>th</sup> at the Hindu Temple Social Hall. Everyone leaves behind footprints in the sands of time, but your generous donations will be remembered by future generations to follow.

We are forever grateful to have the support of Dr. Rakesh Singh, Chairman, Board of Trustees. Please accept our wholehearted appreciation for your incredible support, and I look forward to our continued development of our beloved Temple in the years to come.

May the Lord Prasanna Ganapathi bless us all.

**Deepa Kashyap**  
President, Executive Committee (2017-18)  
[president@htom.us](mailto:president@htom.us)

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

Respected Devotees and Patrons,

Namaste!

Aum Shri Ganashaaya Namah!



It is my pleasure to share with you our busiest festive season in our temple starting with Ganesh Chaturthi and Navaratri celebrations. On behalf of the Hindu Temple, we wish that the festival of lights be the forerunner of joy and prosperity for all. As the holy occasion of Diwali is here and the atmosphere is filled with the spirit of mirth and love, here's hoping this festival of beauty brings our way, bright sparkles of contentment, that stay with us through the days ahead. Diwali is celebrated all over India in various ways: however, the essence behind this festivity is same- to rejoice in the inner light (Atma) or underlying reality of all existence (Brahma).

With the grace of Lord Prasanna Ganapati, the state of our magnificent Temple is strong and our temple is debt-free. All religious, spiritual, educational, and cultural activities are running smoothly due to the selfless support, dedication and service of our Hindu devotees, volunteers, and patrons. I express my sincere appreciation and gratitude to the past Presidents and Chairs of the Board and temple management for their services and dedication.

As far as long-term plans are concerned, we are still following Vision 2022. We have made great progress in religious services with the hiring of another priest and increased puja services and revenue. Educational services through Balvihar and youth classes need innovative ideas, your help, and support. So far, there have been hurdles in achieving many of the Vision 2022 objectives. The biggest one is space. We have overgrown our current space. We must expand our facility to meet the Hindu community needs. We are pleased to inform you that we have reached a deal with Slosburg Realty for 2445 South 130th Circle for \$1,000,000 (14,400 sq. ft.) with the condition to close the sale by Dec. 8, 2017. This will provide us much needed space to expand our growing Hindu community needs.

To expand our religious/spiritual activities for our temple and community, the construction of Sai Sanctum started with Bhoomipujan on July 8. This is one of the best examples of a long-term community need-driven project, which started in 2012 with the 9-year timeline. Through years of discussions and deliberations between various committees, now we have finally realized this project with strong community support.

We hosted a special general body meeting on Oct. 15, to present and discuss both long-term project and open house for the eastside property. We thank you very much for your insight and active support. Overall, the general body meeting was very informative, constructive, and productive. We greatly appreciate feedback from our patrons and donors. I express my sincere gratitude to Shri Saibaba Project implementation committee members for their hard work, supervision and making sure we get the best facility and resources we can afford. We are also fortunate to have Drs. Dash and Ram Bishu as fundraising committee chairs and Dr. Shashi Bhatia as chair of Long-range planning committee, and EC president Deepa Ji, and our finance team chaired by Say Ji, who are instrumental in steering these projects to reality.

As our temple continues to fulfill the religious, spiritual, cultural, educational, and humanitarian needs of our community, we must develop tools to communicate better with our community and beyond. We request you to please visit our website (<http://www.htom.org/>), register yourself to receive emails and updates, and like us on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/HinduTemple.Omaha.Nebraska>). We aspire to reach all of our community members through electronic media and regular post.

On behalf of Hindu Temple, I thank all the volunteers, contributors, sponsors and chair of our Publication committee, Dr. Nagendra Chaturvedi, who helped to bring this special issue of Deepam (Deepavali Edition). As we celebrate our festival of lights, I wish you all a happy festive season. May the divine light of Diwali spread into your life peace, prosperity, happiness and good health forever!

Thanks for your continued support to our temple. Your suggestions are always welcome. Always seeking the blessings of Lord Prasanna Ganapati.



*Rakesh K. Singh*

**Dr. Rakesh K. Singh**

Chair, Board of Trustees; email: [htom.rsingh@gmail.com](mailto:htom.rsingh@gmail.com)

# Financial Update: Hindu Temple Omaha

*Hindu Temple, Omaha NE (Oct 2016 thru Aug 2017)*

INFLOW		OUTFLOW	
<i>Hundi collections cash</i>	<b>\$58,752</b>	<i>Operating expenses</i>	<b>\$101,704</b>
<i>Direct deposits</i>	<b>\$32,686</b>	<i>Staff expenses</i>	<b>\$33,171</b>
<i>Puja services</i>	<b>\$117,383</b>	<i>Priest expenses</i>	<b>\$105,284</b>
<i>Donations</i>	<b>\$129,621</b>	<i>Priest/Staff Housing</i>	<b>\$20,931</b>
<i>Sponsored/event donations*</i>	<b>\$272,644</b>	<i>Other events</i>	<b>\$54,823</b>
<i>Raffle (after prizes, expenses)</i>	<b>\$7,160</b>	<i>Mortgage interest</i>	<b>\$2,863</b>
<i>Priest/staff housing mortgage</i>	<b>\$0</b>	<i>Towards Mortgage/payoff</i>	<b>\$10,611</b>
<i>Total inflow</i>	<b>\$618,246</b>	<i>Towards Housing/payoff</i>	<b>\$13,094</b>
		<i>Total outflow@</i>	<b>\$342,481</b>

**Total Inflow for 2017(YTD) \$442,987      Total outflow for 2017(YTD) \$203,405**

\* \$102,000 Sai Mandir collections have been treated as sponsorship here

@ Mortgage balance was paid off by paying \$201,993

----- **Balances As of August 31,2017** -----

**Balance owed on Mortgage/Short-term line of credit : \$0**

**Balance owed on priest/staff housing mortgage: \$273,889**

**Operating Account Balance : \$326,809**

**Savings (Endowment) balance : \$38,375**

**TRACK YOUR DONATIONS – We track your donations as complete as possible and send donation receipt to your address or email. For any changes please keep us updated with your latest email and physical address by e-mailing to [htom@htom.omhcoxmail.com](mailto:htom@htom.omhcoxmail.com) so that we can send financial communications to your latest email / address.**



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Wishing You All  
A Very Happy Deepavali

From:

Jitender and Ravinder Deogun



Ticket No: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Ticket No: \_\_\_\_\_

**HINDU TEMPLE**  
13010 Arbor St, Omaha, NE 68144

**ANNUAL DEEPAVALI RAFFLE 2017**  
To be held on October 28th at 6:30 pm

Ist Prize: \$1000 in cash  
IInd Prize: 55" LG 4K UHD Smart LED TV (\$750)  
IIIrd Prize: Canon Rebel EOS T6  
DSLR Camera Lens bag bundle (\$550)  
IVth Prize(2 each): Amazon Echo (\$180)  
Vth Prize(4each): \$100 Grocery  
VIth Prize:(5 each): \$50 Indian Restaurant Gift Card  
VIIth Prize(7 each): \$25 Indian Restaurant Gift Card  
VIIIth Prize(10 each): \$15 Movie Gift Card

**\$10**

**Please support Hindu Temple by  
buying Raffle Tickets**





## Bhoomi Puja 2017









**HAPPY  
DEEPAVALI  
WISHES FROM  
THE  
RAMAKRISHNAN  
FAMILY**



**Usha, VT, Praveen, Madan, Lauryl,  
Sabina & Lilian**

# Bhakti is Supreme

Jitender Singh Deogun

India has the unique distinction of contributing richly to the religious landscape of the world. The discoveries made by ancient Rishis in the search for Truth contributed not only to the Indian religions but also to the religions of non-Indian origin. Bhakti (भक्ति) is one of the basic spiritual disciplines propagated by the ancient Rishis. Bhakti is generally defined as the religion of profound love, devotion, meditation, and Simran—continuous remembrance of God. In Narada Bhakti Sutra (NBS) Bhakti is defined as follows,

सा त्वस्मिन् परमप्रेमरूपा ॥३॥ NBS 3.

That (Bhakti) is the very nature of the Supreme Love for the Lord. Lord's devotees, as expressed by Sri Chaitanya in Siksastakam (SI), do not long for anything other than the Bhakti of the Lord:

न धनं न जनं न सुन्दरी कवितां वा जागदीश कामये ॥

मम जन्मनि जन्मनीश्वरे भवताद्भक्तिरहेतुकी त्वयी ॥ SI-4 ॥

O Prabhu, the Lord of the universe, I have no desires for wealth, followers, beautiful women, or poetic attainments. My only prayer to Thee is that You bless me with Your selfless devotion, birth after birth. Lord's devotees do not even care for salvation but only the love and devotion of the Lord. Guru Nanak prays to the Lord:

राजु न चाहऊ मुकति न चाहऊ

मनि प्रीति चरन कमलारे ॥ SGGS pp. 534

Humbled Guru Nanak prays to the Nirankar Prabhu, I do not yearn for a kingdom, nor do I yearn for salvation (मुक्ति), I only long for the Love and Devotion of Your Lotus Feet. Bhakti is man's quest for knowledge of Brahman with love, devotion, contemplative meditation and truthful living. Guru Nanak says,

राजन राम रवै हितकारि ॥ रण महि लूझै मनुआ मारि ॥

राति दिनंति रहै रंगि राता ॥ तीनि भवन जुग चारे जाता ॥

जिनि जाता सो तिस ही जेहा ॥ अति निरमाइलु सोझसि देहा ॥

रहसी रामु रिदै इक भाइ ॥ अंतरि सबदु साचि लिब लाइ ॥ SGGS pp. 931

(Bhakti is) Love induced Simran of King of Kings, the Brahman, conquering the mind and breaking shackles of Maya, and contemplative

meditating day and night seeking knowledge of Brahm, (because) one who knows Brahman becomes pure, in fact, becomes Brahman. (Bhakti is) realizing that the Eternal Bliss, the Brahman, lives in one's heart and being conscious of His presence remaining connected to Him.

Bhakti started in ancient India very early in Vedic period. Although the term Bhakti was first used in Vedanta, yet the conceptual origin of Bhakti can be found in the hymns of Rig Veda related to various deities like Vishnu, Varuna, and Usha. In fact, Bhakti is one of the very ancient paths for the search of Truth. There are quite a few verses in Rig Veda that are related to the concept of Bhakti. Later, in Vedanta, the discipline of Bhakti was systemized into religion and spiritual philosophy. The earliest use of the term Bhakti and related terms like grace and surrender can be found in Upanishads, i.e., श्वेताश्वतरोपनिषद् - Shvetashvatara Upanishad (Sh.U.).

यस्य देवे परा भक्तिः यथा देवे तथा गुरौ ॥

तस्यैते कथिता ह्यर्था प्रकाशन्ते महात्मनः ॥ Sh.U. ६-२३ ॥

प्रकाशन्ते महात्मन इति ॥

These Truths, when expounded to a mahatma (a sage), the one who has supreme love and devotion (supreme Bhakti) not only to the God but also to his Guru, will be effulgent as inner experience in him. Indeed, these will be effulgent in those mahatmas (and only in those).

Bhakti in its generic form can be understood as profound religious or spiritual love and devotion. However, its form of expression can be particularized when the deity of interest and/or context for devotion is known. The philosophical spectrum of Bhakti (भक्ति) spans from the theistic dualism of Dvaita (द्वैत) to absolute monism of Advaita (अद्वैत) philosophies and thus represents a continuum of devotional love from an emotional perspective to an intellectual/contemplative perspective.

*Continued to the next page.....*



The Bhakti movement of *medieval period* started in Southern India (Tamil Nadu and nearby areas) by the Nayanars and Alvars devotional poets and worshipers of Shiva and Vishnu, respectively. The hymns written in Tamil by these poets helped propagate the Bhakti movement. Later, Bhakti movement spread to Northern India and South Asia. It developed into a phenomenal multiplex that made multi-dimensional impact on Indian religious landscape.

The concept of Bhakti constitutes the spiritual core of the Indian religions, especially Hinduism and Sikhism. Hindu and Sikh Scriptures provide best resources for the pursuit of Bhakti. Scriptures like Srimad Bhagavad Gita—the most popular Hindu Scripture, Bhagavata Purana, Narada Bhakti Sutra and Sandilya Bhakti Sutra represent the classical scriptural resources, whereas Viveka Choodamani (VC) of Adi Shankaracharya, Divya Prabhandham, Tirumurai, and Sri Guru Granth Sahib (SGGS)—the Sikh scriptures, represent the later scriptural resources. The Hindu Dharma offers a diverse spectrum of Bhakti from an emotional love of Chaitanya and Narada on one end to a contemplative Bhakti of Adi Shankracharya on the other end. Emotional love and devotion for a Personal God is effulgent in most Puranas and Bhagavad Gita reconciles devotion of a Personal God and contemplation on the Transcendental Brahman. Sikh Dharma teaches intense devotional love integrated with meditative contemplation on the Transcendental Brahman in the context of Vishishtadvaita (विशिष्टाद्वैत) of Ramanuja and Advaita (अद्वैत) of Shankaracharya. Numerous devotional hymns in the Sikh Scriptures are abundantly emotional. Guru Nanak says,

मेरा मनु लोचै गुर दरसन ताई ॥ बिलप करे चात्रिक की निआई ॥

त्रिखा न ऊतरै साँति न आवै बिनु दरसन संत पिआरे जीऊ ॥ SGGS pp. 96

My mind longs for Darshana of the Brahm, it is grieving like Chaatrik. My thirst is not quenched, and I can find no peace, without the Blessed Darshana of the Beloved ParBrahm. Again,

घटि घटि बसंत बासुदेवह पारब्रहम परमेसुरह ॥ (SGGS PP. 1356)

जाचंति नानक कृपाल प्रसादं नह बिसरंति नह बिसरंति नारायणह ॥

The Supreme Brahman, The Transcendent, The WaheGuru, dwells in each and every heart. Guru

Nanak prays for the blessing that by The Grace of The Merciful Lord, we may never forget, never ever forget Narayan.

Hindu and Sikh philosophy clearly and emphatically propagates Bhakti Yoga as the best path for knowing the Brahman and thus breaking the bondage of Maya and liberating the human spirit. Shankaracharya in Vivekachudamani says, मोक्षकारणसामग्रयां भक्तिरेव गरीयसी ॥ V.C. 31

Among all the necessary instruments and conditions leading to liberation Bhakti, Devotion, or Divine Love alone is the greatest. Narada is considered eternal devotee and apostle of the path of Bhakti (भक्ति मार्ग). Puranic stories reveal that he spontaneously appears to help the seekers of Lord and to propagate path of Bhakti. Shandilya Bhakti Sutra (SBS) as well as Narada Bhakti Sutra also propagate that Bhakti is supreme, एतेन विकल्पोऽपि प्रत्युक्तः ॥ SBS 17 ॥

These expositions resolve the contradiction in Gyana and Bhakti. Thus, the Brahman, the highest pursuit of a devotee, is known by Bhakti alone.

त्रिसत्यस्य भक्तिरेव गरीयसी भक्तिरेव गरीयसी ॥ NBS 81

Among the three paths (truths) (Karma, Gyan, and Bhakti Yoga) Bhakti, Devotion, or Divine Love alone is the supreme, indeed Devotion alone is the greatest. Narada Bhakti Sutra further declares that यद्ब्रह्मा पुमान् सिद्धो भवति अमृतो भवति तृप्तो भवति ॥ NBS 4

A devotee who has found (gained) the supreme devotion, attains perfection, immortality and ultimate fulfillment. Similarly, for Guru Nanak, Brahman is all but Divine Love,

नानक कै घरि केवल नामु ॥४॥४॥ SGGS pp. 534

Guru Nanak's philosophy teaches only Bhakti, Devotion, and Love of Brahman. Again,

नानक नाम अमोल ॥१॥ SGGS pp. 265

Guru Nanak says Bhakti of Brahman is Supreme.

For Guru Nanak, Brahman is Divine Love,

मिलि सखीआ पुछहि कहु कंत नीसाणी ॥

रसि प्रेम भरी कहु बोलि न जाणी ॥ SGGS pp. 459

Friends meet and ask me, say, what is the mark of the Lord. He is all but Love, other than Divine Love, He is indescribable, is imperceptible.

**Acknowledgements:** In addition to study of Hindu and Sikh Scriptures, the author benefited greatly from reading books by Dr. J. S. Neki, Dr. S. S. Kohli, Swami Yatiswarananda and others.



## Bal Vihar – Hindu Temple Omaha

Our children are our future and in our Temple's opinion nothing is more important than them. And thus the Temple has made Bal Vihar a signature service that is offered to our community.

In the Bal Vihar children are taught about the rich ancient Hindu culture that they are a part of. They are taught about the purpose of a Hindu life and about the moral and ethical values this faith cherishes. It teaches them to love and respect all human beings. These are taught to children and youth using the medium of stories, drama, videos, arts, crafts and discussion. In these classes the kids are also taught to speak in Hindi.

They are taught the Hindu view of life is that we are a divine being, a soul, who experiences many lives on Earth, and that the purpose of our being here is spiritual upliftment. Hindu festivals are celebrated with the children and they are encouraged to participate in the religious festivities as we feel this is the best way to teach children about their dharma and their culture.

This past year the Bal Vihar kids participated in the Temple Diwali function where they recited shlokas and sang a bhajan, they showed great talent and coordination. The Bal Vihar kids along with the Youth group collected funds to feed the homeless at Steven Center, something that made us all proud of their laudable humanitarian efforts. We celebrated Holi and kids had such fun playing with colors. And then finally we had a Bal Vihar year end picnic with lots of fun activities.

Our teachers are all community volunteers who have been performing this seva for the last several years.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our dedicated teachers:

Mrs. Arunima Dasgupta  
Mrs. Archana Janakiram  
Mrs. Monica Arora  
Mrs. Natasha Keshawani  
Mrs. Timisha Singh Rohatgi  
Mrs. Vandana Singh  
Mrs. Rashmi Reddy  
Mrs. Swaroop Nijhawan  
Dr. Alekha Dash  
Dr. Phani Tej Adidam  
Dr. Sanjay Singh

The registration for Balvihar for the session of 2017-2018 is open and ongoing. The kids can be registered online on the Temple website. The registration fee for Balvihar is \$80.00 per child. The Balvihar admits kids from 1st grade through 6th grade and the classes are from 10:30 am to 11:45 am. Kids from 6th grade onwards join the youth group. The youth group class is from 11:00 am to 12 noon.

# **Bal Vihar: Curriculum Outline**

## **Prathama Junior**

### Religion/Culture:

- Learn the Balvihar prayers and Shlokas
- Recite up to 4 simple Shlokas
- Learn about the Hindu deities in our Temple
- Learn the Aarti
- Learn some of the common art forms of India
- Learn religious and moral values through stories
- Learn about major festivals/holidays of India (coincide with the Temple events)
- Learn the Indian National Anthem
- Learn about common Indian trees/plants that are useful in many ways and considered sacred
- Learn about Hindu symbolism – 3 to 5 symbols/icons

### Language – Hindi:

- Recite up to 5 simple poems in Hindi
- Recognize the sounds of the Hindi alphabets
- Learn to count 0-10 in Hindi
- Learn the name of common colors in Hindi
- Learn the name of facial features in Hindi
- Learn the name of body parts in Hindi
- Learn the name of the days of the week in Hindi
- Learn to name up to 6 common domestic animals in Hindi
- Learn to name up to 6 common wild animals in Hindi
- Learn to name up to 6 common fruits in Hindi
- Learn to name up to 6 common vegetables in Hindi

## **Prathama Senior**

### Culture and Religion:

- Hinduism One God many forms
- Hindu Trinity: Lord Brahma, Lord Vishnu and Lord Shiva
- Lord Ganesha: Significance and Symbolism, Elephant head, Moon, Appetite, The Scribe and The devotee
- Krishna : Birth, Putana, Kaliya snake, Govardhan, End of Kamsa and Gita Updesh
- Significance/ Story/Symbolism of Vaishno Devi, Durga Maa, Ram Parivaar, Aayyapa, Kartikeya, Lakshmi and Saraswati, Balaji, Jagarnath, Lord Shiva, Parvati and Navgraha

### Hindi:

- Adjectives: Colors, Sizes, Shapes, Taste, Qualities and Quantities
- Verbs
- Pronouns
- Family
- Words for Nature and Time
- Workbook

## **Dwitiya**

The kids stay in Dwitiya for two years, 3rd and 4th grade. The class is interactive and encourages the kid's participation.

### Religion and culture:

- We teach the story of Ramayan and the DashAvatar alternate years in great detail
- Discuss religious and moral values
- Talk about the Hindu festivals as they are celebrated throughout the year
- Learn about religious symbols and their significance

Learn up to two Bhajans in a year  
Learn Sholakas  
Learn the Aarti

Hindi:

We teach the kids spoken Hindi. We do not learn to write using Hindi alphabets. The writing by the kids is done in the English alphabet.

Build up on the common Hindi Vocabulary  
Learning greetings and introduction in Hindi  
Introduce kids to 1st, 2nd and 3rd person  
Introduce kids to singular and plural  
Learning common pronouns  
Learning about verbs  
Learning to make simple sentences  
Learning common nouns and adjectives.  
Using common nouns and adjectives to form more complex sentences

The goal is for kids is to be able to write a page on their favorite topic by the end of the year.

**Tritiya**

Religion and Culture:

Mahabharat: Tell stories  
Discuss about the characters in Mahabharat  
Yama and Niyama (dos and don'ts) of Hinduism  
Questions and misconceptions  
    What is God?  
    Why do Hindus worship many Gods?  
    Why do Hindus worship idols?  
    What is pooja?  
Prayer about one God-many names  
Hinduism and ecology  
Compare and contrast world religions

- ◆ Hinduism
- ◆ Christianity
- ◆ Judaism
- ◆ Islam

We will share some Parables and Aesop's Fables with them. Students will learn some Bhajans.

Hindi:

In our Tritiya class we teach spoken Hindi. Children will learn to speak the language by conversing in simple sentences.

Translation of English to Hindi words with advanced vocabulary will be our ongoing effort throughout the year. Sentence formation with subject, predicate parts of speech and proper grammar will also be included in our study.

We will make special effort to speak in Hindi during our class time.

Students will learn rhymes and poems from the Balvihar book.

Helping children to create their own stories.

Students will learn some rhymes and poems from the Balvihar book.





## Ganesh Chaturthi Celebration 2017





# Mahashivaratri Puja 2017





Best Wishes Happy Diwali

From:

**Smitha and Alekha Dash**

**Rohan Dash**

**Debleena and Ajay Saini**





## Lord Shiva

Trident represents the three powers of knowledge, desire and implementation

Drum symbolizes sound which represents the words of the Vedas, the holy scriptures given by the Lord to guide us through life.

Serpents on neck signify the ego which once mastered can be worn as an ornament

Rudraksha beads denote purity. The mala or rosary in the right hand symbolizes concentration.

Face on head represents the Ganges, the holy river, signifying the flow of scriptural teachings passing wisdom from one generation to the next.

Moon on forehead symbolizes that the Lord is the master of time and is himself timeless.

Large oval dot on forehead is the third eye of knowledge which, if opened, reduces to ashes the person in its vision. It is a symbol of the Destroyer of evil and ignorance.

Wearing a tiger skin Shiva is said to be fearless.

# HAPPY DEEPAVALI

## BHAVANA AND RAKESH SINGH

## JANAKBHAI DAVE





## Jagannath Yatra 2017





## Durga Puja 2017 by Bengali Samiti of Nebraska



## Photo Gallery: Balvihar Kids Activity



***Please Join Us in Thanking  
Dedicated Balvihar Teachers***



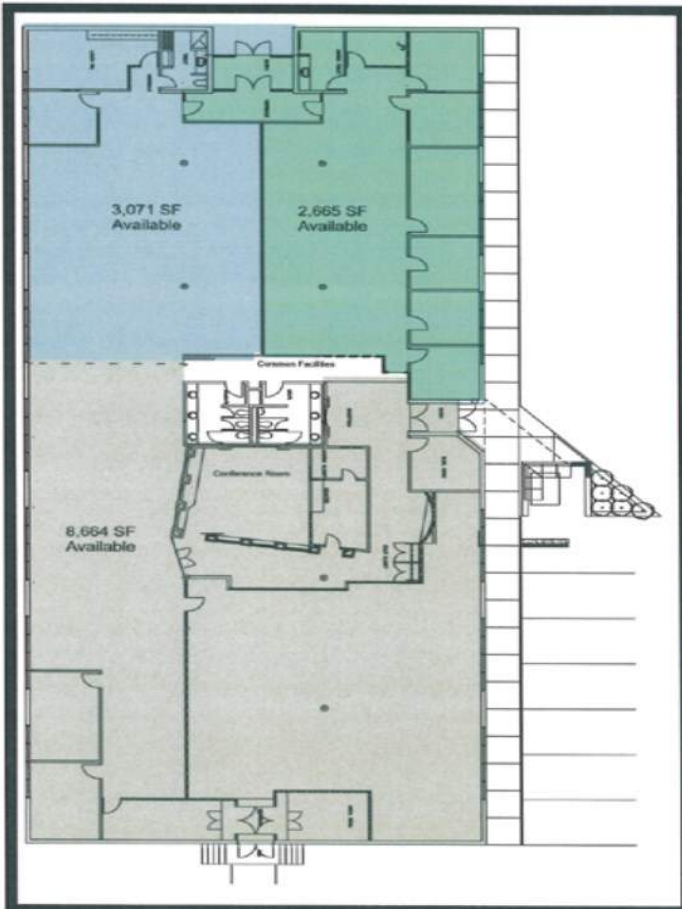


# Proposed Hindu Temple Extension

Land: 1.4 Acres; 61,292 SF

Finished space: 14,400 SF

Price: \$1,000,000



*Proposed Hindu Temple Extension Continued.....*

**Need:** Our community has grown exponentially, and so is our need for more space. Our temple social hall serves as a hub for all Hindu community, IAN, and regional organizations. It is almost 25 years since the inception of this temple (1993). It is time to go for next phase to meet our growing community need to expand our educational, social, and community services.

**Opportunity:** We are land-locked by properties owned by the same family who never sells anything. This is one of the golden opportunity in the Hindu Temple History for next big thing. It is now the civic duty of the entire Hindu Community, their friends and well-wishers to come forward and make this happen.

**Cost and Business plan:** Agreed price is \$1M for 14,400 sq. ft. It will quadruple our social/educational/community uses space. Currently, our temple is debt free and there is strong support for expanding our facility. We anticipate using space as is immediate. Our team is also developing a business plan to make it self-sustaining. Immediate uses include (but not limited to): Balvihar and other regional language classes; Yoga and Learning activities for NextGen; Senior citizen activities; Vedantic Center of Nebraska; Gift Shop/Temple Cafeteria; Social/Community Hall; Event Center for community activities

**Fund Raising:** We all as a Hindu community are stakeholders here. We have developed a different mechanism to support this including investment grade unsecured promissory note (target \$1.1M) and usual 5-year pledge drive (target \$1.5M).

**Closing Date:** Dec. 8

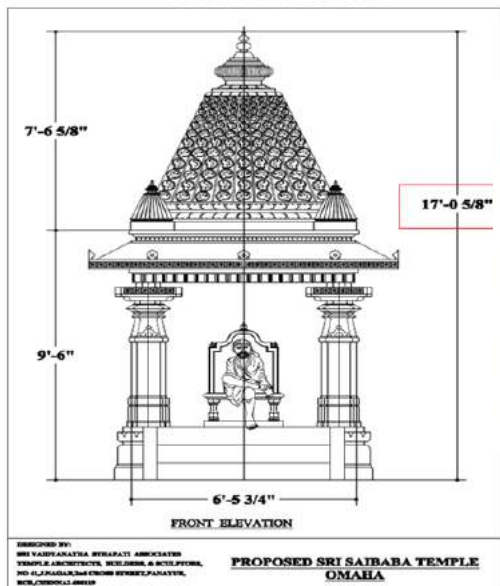
**Your enthusiasm, commitment, and philanthropic investment can make a difference**



# Shri Saibaba Sanctum Project



FRONT ELEVATION



Sanctum Cost Projection: \$600,000

No	Item	Estimate	Remarks
1	Civil Construction	350,000	
2	Sanctum Construction	80,000	
3	Idol and sanctum items	50,000	
4.	Interior Items	50,000	
5	Kumbabhisekam	35,000	
6	Misc. Items	35,000	Architect, demolition, etc

Bhoomi Pujan: July 8, 2017

**Fund Raising Event: Nov. 5**  
**Target: \$1.5M**



**BE A PART OF THE GROWTH & EXPANSION PLAN FOR OUR TEMPLE**

Phase I



**SRI SAIBABA TEMPLE CONSTRUCTION**

Phase II



**ACQUIRING ADJACENT PROPERTY FOR FUTURE EXPANSION**

**Endow A Pledge Drive - 2017**

\$1,000 x 5 yrs = \$5,000

\$3,000 x 5 yrs = \$15,000

\$6,000 x 5 yrs = \$30,000

\$2,000 x 5 yrs = \$10,000

\$5,000 x 5 yrs = \$25,000

\$10,000 x 5 yrs = \$50,000

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: (Home) \_\_\_\_\_ (Cell) \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

OUR PLEDGE	Year 2017	Year 2018	Year 2019	Year 2020	Year 2021
TOTAL (\$)					

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**HELP US TO GROW & MEET THE GROWING NEEDS OF OUR COMMUNITY**

Please mail the completed form to Hindu Temple, 13010 Arbor Street, Omaha, NE 68144  
or Drop this form in the Temple Donation Box or email to [htom@htom.omhcoxmail.com](mailto:htom@htom.omhcoxmail.com)



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Kid "Om Naik"**

**HAPPY DEEPAVALI AND PROSPEROUS NEW  
YEAR WISHES**



From:

**PURNIMA AND BABU GUDA  
RAHUL AND REEMA**





Happy Deepavali Wishes

From: **Saraswathi G. Joshi**  
**Sumangala and Shantaram Joshi**  
**And Deepa Joshi**  
**Yashaswini K. Joshi**



Wish you all a very  
**HAPPY DEEPAVALI**

May the divine light of Diwali spread in to  
your life peace, prosperity, pleasure, and good health



**Shashi and Subhash**  
**Bhatia & Family**



# Onam

Onam is one of the most significant harvest festivals of Kerala and is an attraction for thousands of people outside and within the state. All the activities during this season are centered on worshipping, music, dance, sports, boat races and good food. This festival is celebrated in the Malayalam month Chingam (ending of August and beginning of September).

## The Legend

Like most festivals of India, Onam too has a legend associated with it.



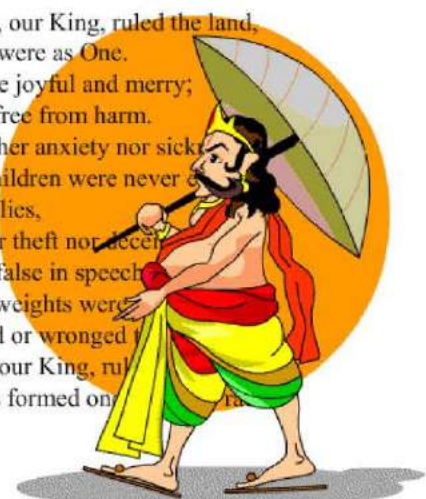
Story goes that during the reign of mighty asura (demon) king, Mahabali, Kerala witnessed its golden era. Everybody in the state was happy and prosperous and king was highly regarded by his subjects. Mahabali decided to do a Yaga to make him undefeatable. This news made Indra the King of Devas upset. He approached Lord Vishnu for help. Vishnu gave word to Indra that he will re incarnate as Vamana and destroy Mahabali. Vishnu reincarnated as Vamana and

came to mahabali on the day of the Yaga in the form of a Brahmin boy. He asked Mahabali for three feet of land and Mahabali granted the Brahmin boy's wish. The moment he approved the wish the boy began to grow he grew till sky. With the first feet he measured earth, heaven and the underworld. With the second feet he measured all the oceans and sky and asked the king where to keep the third feet. The humble king to save his word asked to keep the feet on his head and measure the third. Vamana pushed

Mahabali to the underworld with his feet. Before pushing him down Vamana asked Mahabali whether he have any last wish. And Mahabali asked the lord to grant him permission to visit his people of Kerala once in a year. It is this visit of Mahabali that is celebrated as Onam every year. People make all efforts to celebrate the festival in a grand way and impress upon their dear King that they are happy and wish him well.

The famous song heard all over Kerala (translated):

' When Maveli, our King, ruled the land,  
All the people were as One.  
And people live joyful and merry;  
They were all free from harm.  
There was neither anxiety nor sick,  
Death of the children were never  
There were no lies,  
There is neither theft nor deceit,  
And no one is false in speech,  
Measures and weights were  
No one cheated or wronged  
When Maveli, our King, ruled  
All the peoples formed on



*Continued .....*



## Onam Celebrations

Rich cultural heritage of Kerala comes out in its best form and spirit during the ten day long festival. Of all these days, most important ones are the first day, Atham and second day Thiru Onam. Atha Poo is prepared in the front courtyard by girls of the house to welcome the spirit of King Mahabali in whose honor Onam is celebrated. Boys play a supporting role and help in gathering flowers. In the following days, more flowers are added to Pookalam. As a result Pookalam turns out to be of massive size on the final day.



### Ona sadya

The most impressive part of Onam celebration is the grand feast called Onasadya, prepared on Thiruonam. It is a nine course meal consisting of 11 to 13 essential dishes. Onasadya is served on banana leaves and people sit on a mat laid on the floor to have the meal. The central place in the row is occupied by the eldest member of the family. In front of him is placed a lamp at a distance. Towards the west of the lamp is

placed a small banana leaf on which the food is served. This is an offering made in the name of Lord Ganapathy. There is a fixed order of serving the meal and a set place to serve the various dishes on the leaf. A lot of preparation and hard work goes in making of the scrumptious Onasadya.



### Fun- Dances and Games

After the grand meal, it's time for people to indulge in recreational activities and enjoy the festival. There is a set of traditional games to be played on Onam which are collectively called, **Onakalikal**. It includes ball games, combats, archery and Kutukutu (Kerala version of Kabaddi).

An enchanting feature of Onam is **Vallamkali**, the Snake Boat Race, held on the river Pampa. It is a colourful sight to watch the decorated boat oared by hundreds of boatmen amidst chanting of songs and cheering by spectators.

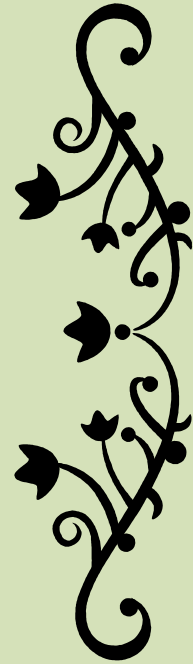


Women indulge in cultural activities. Kaikotti kali and Thumbi Thullal are two graceful dances performed by women on Onam. Folk performances like Kummatti kali and Pulikali add to the zest of celebrations

*Continued .....*

## Conclusion

Onam is the biggest festival in the Indian state of Kerala. Carnival of Onam lasts for ten days and brings out the best of Kerala culture and tradition. Intricately decorated Pookalam, delicious Onasadya, breathtaking Snake Boat Race and exotic Kaikottikali dance are some of the most remarkable features of Onam. Onam is celebrated not only by Hindus but also by Christians and Muslims. It is one such festival that unites all the people regardless of race and religion.



Compiled by : Divya Vinod



**HAPPY DEEPAVALI 2017 TO  
FRIENDS & FAMILY**

From:

**Dr. CHANDRA , LIN, PAREENA AND  
NISHYIA PONNIAH**

**NORFOLK, NEBRASKA**





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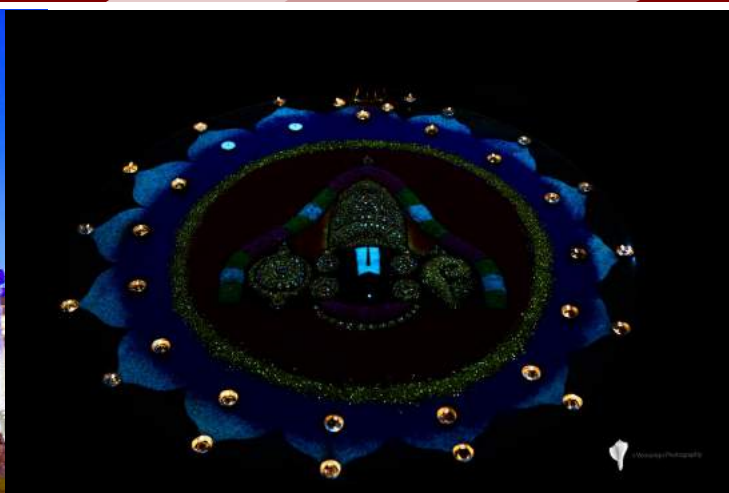
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**Special  
General Body  
Meeting  
October 15,  
2017**





**Deepavali  
Celebration  
October 18, 2017**

# Editor's Corner

It is our great pleasure to bring a 2017 Deepavali special issue of the Deepam. We have included the useful information and details of the major events such as Deepavali Puja, Diwali wishes of our community members and an upcoming major events/poojas of 2017. I thank them for their continued support of the Deepam. In this special issue, we have included several articles related to religious, spiritual and social issues for our community. We have also updated the Balvihar activities. We want to sincerely thank all the well-wishers and the contributors for this publication. We invite you all to consider contributing articles for publication in Deepam. Articles from young adults are also welcome and I request the parents to encourage their children to contribute their articles. As always constructive comments and suggestions from the readers are most welcome.

I also take this opportunity to thank the members of Publication Advisory Committee Shantaram Joshi, Babu Guda and Manju Mehta for their help in bringing this issue. My special thanks to Ramya Iyer for her significant contribution on designing and art work to this Deepam. We also want to thank Mr. Shane Harris from the Creighton University Printing in helping us in printing this publication. A major way of improving the quality of Deepam is to get a constructive feedback from its readers. I look forward to your suggestions to improve the Deepam.

Wishing you all a "Very Happy Deepavali and Prosperous New Year 2017"

*Namaskaar!*

*Nagendra Chaturvedi*

## HAPPY DEEPAVALI AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR WISHES



From:

**Archana and Nagendra Chaturvedi  
Partha and Pahaan**







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**Happy Deepavali to You All**  
**From Hindu Temple, Omaha NE**

