



Newsletter

July / Aug, 2009



www.augustahts.com

P.O. Box. 204264, Augusta, GA 30907. 1421 Lukes Rd., Augusta GA 30909. Ph. (706)-860-3864

Upcoming Events

August 1 - 2, 2009

Ekadashi Rudrabhishekam

This elaborate pooja to worship Lord Shiva will be performed over two days. Rudra is a form of Shiva and there are 11 Rudras (Eka-1, Dasha-10). In this pooja all 11 Rudras are worshiped. After Kalasha Sthapana, Abhishekam will be done to each of the 11 Rudras. Pooja will be done in your name, with your sankalpa (specific objective for pooja). Sponsorship is \$25 per family.

Aug. 1 (SAT) 6:00 - 8:00 PM: Kalasha Sthapana, Linga Abhishekam, followed by Prasad.

Aug. 2 (SUN) 10:00 AM - Noon: Rudra Havan and Abhishekam, followed by Mahaprasad

August 13, 2009 7:00 - 9:00 PM

Krishna Janmashtami

Abhishekam from 7:00 to 8:00 PM. Puja, bhajans and arti will be from 8:00 to 9:00 PM.

Augusta 23, 2009 10:00 AM - Noon **Ganesh Chaturthi**

Celebration will be followed by mahaprasad.

Articles for Newsletter

Dear HTS members,

As you may have noticed, we started a few new features in previous newsletter under the titles of '*tan*', '*man*' and '*dhan*'. To improve the content of our newsletter, we solicit articles from the readers. In particular, we seek articles on health related topics. These could be non-technical short articles (600 - 700 words) of general interest. We are fortunate to have Dr. Ramesh Pai's religious column as a regular feature. Please send us your contributions on other topics, if you wish to communicate interesting, informative and entertaining ideas to the members of HTS (email addresses are on the last page). Thank you for your participation.

- Editors

July/August 2009

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Message from the Chairman

Dear devotees and friends of HTS Augusta,

I take this opportunity to share with you some of the recent events and developments regarding our temple.

1. First we celebrated the "Bramhotsav" – a magnificent 4-day event of bhajan-puja-havan performed with great enthusiasm and community participation. We prayed for the Lord's forgiveness of our past errors of omissions and commissions in the discharge of our duties and for the purification of the temple premise. Our sincere thanks go to Dr. Sridharan for the initiation and execution of this big event.

2. We also performed a short puja and held prayer ceremony at the cleared Old Temple site with active participation of the devotees.

3. We are happy to announce that after a relatively long pause the old temple renovation project is now back on track. The project complete with its drawings, specifications and demolition plan has been approved and the necessary construction permit issued by the county. We are grateful to Messrs. Karthick S., Adarsh G. and Pankaj B. for their help in the evaluation and selection of the Architect and the Building Contractor.

4. Also to convince ourselves of the desirability and cost-effectiveness of the renovation project the alternative concept of constructing an equivalent new (Butler type) building with similar amenities and floor space was evaluated in depth. Independent cost estimates were obtained from two builders and in both cases the cost of new building was more than double the cost of renovation.

5. We are now starting the fund raising campaign and would ask for your help and yes, your donations. We are seeking donors of all denominations (\$100, \$2000, \$5000, \$10,000 plus) as well as sponsors for the facilities (Stage, Auditorium, Kitchen, Rooms etc.). We specially look forward to all our past big donors to enthusiastically come forward and pave the way for a successful campaign. Our tentative plan (not finalized yet) is to acknowledge all donations in commemorative plaques to be displayed on the walls (\$100 applicable for youth and balashala alumni only). We will communicate the details when finalized.

6. Finally I would request the defaulting members to pay their annual dues at the earliest. With ongoing construction expenses we are in immediate need for cash. I know many of you would be surprised to find your names on the default list. So please check and be confirmed that you are a member in good standing with dues fully paid.

Let the Lord's blessings be on all of us. Om, Tat, Sat.

BNRoy

[On behalf of BOT]

Dr. Pai's Column

Chapter III, Verse 21 of the Bhagavad Gita states:

*Yad yad acarati sreshta tad tad evo itara janah Sa yat
pramanamkurute lokas tad anuvartate*

Whatever example leaders in society set up, the common folk will follow.

In the earlier article, the role of many of the characters in Hindu mythology was considered and the valuable moral and ethical values which can be learned from them were stressed.

The epic *Mahabharata* of Sage *Vyasa* is a veritable treasure house of different types of characters, some with many fine virtues, some downright wicked and others of a mixed nature. Studying these, there must be a sincere and determined effort on our part to pursue the path of virtue and avoid the path of evil so that we can evolve towards our ultimate goal of God Realization.

Consider *Bhishma*, the oldest of the *Kuru* clan. He had divinity built in him. He was the youngest among the eight *Vasus*, a group of demigods who had incurred a curse to be born as mortals on earth. He was born of the sacred *Ganga* through the *Kuru* emperor *Santanu*. His name at birth was *Devarata*. His mother took him away from the royal palace and had him educated and trained in the martial arts by sage *Parashurama*. As a teenager, he was returned to his father who named him as the crown prince to succeed him. However, emperor *Santanu* fell deeply in love with *Satyavati*, the daughter of the chief of fishermen. Her father consented to the marriage only on condition that her son would be the future emperor. *Santanu* thought that this would be grossly unfair to his oldest son *Devarata* and could not agree to this proposal. His love for *Satyavati* was so intense that he went into a state of severe depression. Coming to know of this, the intelligent *Devarata* called on the fisherman chief and assured him that he would not claim the throne. The fisherman chief raised a further objection that though *Devarata* forsook his claim, the children born to him could still aspire for the throne. The noble *Devarata*, who had his father's happiness at heart, was prepared for any sacrifice on his part. Calling upon God as his witness, he swore that not only was he giving up his right to the throne but that he would remain celibate, a *brahmachari*

throughout his life. Even the heavens applauded this most wonderful action. He was also given a boon that he could choose the time of his death. From that day he was called *Bhishma* which means "The Terrible." This pledge has been much praised and is called the *Bhishma Pratigjna*. *Bhishma* also declared that he would remain loyal to the *Kuru* Empire and its capital city *Hastinapura* at any cost. That is the reason he fought against the *Pandavas* during the *Kurukshetra* war.

Many years later, *Bhishma* attended the *swayamvara* arranged for the three daughters of the King of *Kasi*. He fought against the many warrior kings assembled for the occasion and defeated all of them in order to get worthy wives for his stepbrothers, *Chitrangada* and *Vichitravirya*. Both princes died relatively young without begetting any children. This created a crisis as the *Kuru* throne was left vacant as *Santanu* had died earlier. *Satyavati* tried her best to persuade *Bhishma* to assume rulership but he would not rescind from the holy vow he had taken.

Bhishma was one of the few people who recognized that *Sri Krishna* was a *Divine Incarnation*. *Sri Krishna* knew that *Bhishma* could not be killed by anyone directly face to face in the battle. *Bhishma* however had publicly declared that he would not fight against a woman. King *Drupada's* eldest offspring was a girl who met a *gandharva* and got transformed into a man. She underwent training for warfare, and as *Shikandi* fought on the side of the *Pandavas*. It was then contrived that *Shikandi* would stand in front of *Arjuna's* chariot when he confronted *Bhishma*, who could not retaliate true to his public declaration. *Bhishma* was mortally wounded and lay on a bed of arrows in the battlefield waiting for the favorable time of *Uttarayana* to reach heaven. After the *Pandavas* won the war, due to their great affection and admiration for *Bhishma*, they visited him. He blessed them and on this occasion recited the very holy *Vishnu Sahasranama* giving the thousand names of Lord *Vishnu*. He also gave extremely valuable advice to *Yudhishtira*, who would become emperor. This is the famous *Bhishma Neeti* which gives details of state craft and is recorded in the *Shanti Parva* of the *Mahabharata*.



VENKATESWARA BRAHMOTSAVAM



Slumdog and the millionaire

It was another hot and muggy afternoon in Dharavi, Mumbai. Jai had to stop collecting plastic cans so he could go home to see Basanti, his sick mother. She contracted a bug that has been going around the neighborhood. The pharmacy clerk told him that Basanti would need amoxicillin and aspirin tablets to get better. Jai could not afford to let her ride this fever out as in the past, because she is really frail. The medicine would cost him Rs. 50, which he did not have. Mota Rajan, the local slum lord, offered him money. Jai had to pay back Rs. 60 within a month, after he collects money from the plastic recycling center. That is a whopping 240% annual interest rate. Pretty steep even for Mumbai and certainly not a favorable comparison to the 5-10% rates we are used to in Columbia County, GA. As a conscientious HTS member, your most appropriate response to this outrageous incident would be;

- A.** Offer money to Jai and organize a fund raising and awareness campaign later in Augusta, GA.
- B.** Contact Mr. A. Bachchan with the help of a common friend and ask for assistance to form a non-governmental organization (NGO) to address similar issues.
- C.** Challenge Mota Rajan to arm wrestle and ask for free money for Jai, if you win.
- D.** Compliment Mota Rajan on his good work and ask if you could partner with him to establish a bank.

It is understandable if you answered **A** or **B** (without the help of your lifeline; the HTS news letter). However, the best response would have been **D**. How can it be? Can we really condone, or worse yet promote, this sort of profit making and greedy behavior? The answer lies in understanding a relatively new concept proposed by C. K. Prahalad, an economics professor at the University of Michigan. In his book titled "*The Fortune at the Bottom of the Pyramid: Eradicating Poverty through Profits*", he gives several examples of poverty penalty. Average annual lending rate in Mumbai is 15%, while the prevailing rate in Dharavi is 600 - 1000%. This more than 40-fold higher interest rate in poor neighborhoods is referred to as the poverty penalty. It is not unique to

money lending or to Dharavi. The penalty rates reported for municipal water, medicine and rice in Dharavi are 37, 10 and 1.2 fold, respectively. Several factors contribute to poverty penalty, with only one of them being greater return on investment. Others relate to costs of doing business in poor neighborhoods. Thus, a 240% interest rate compared to a realistic alternative of 600% does not seem as bad now. If you can set up a bank that brings these rates further down, you are certainly helping the poor. In fact, this is exactly what Prof. Prahalad advocates in his book. There is money to be made at the bottom of pyramid (BOP). All the charitable organizations, NGOs and corporate social responsibility programs put together cannot tackle the poverty penalty and associated issues. They simply are not big enough. On the other hand, if you stop viewing the poor as hapless victims and look at them as consumer base, then one could make money as well as help alleviate poverty penalty. Furthermore, the dignity and self-respect of those at the BOP is preserved.

The concept is a bit reminiscent of Adam Smith's idea of the invisible hand. The baker does not make bread out of the goodness of his heart, but rather to make profit. Similarly, others in society engage in exchange of goods and services as they seek to make a profit (through legitimate means of course). This leads to improved productivity and benefits the society as though the invisible hand of god has lifted the society.

Professor Prahalad cites many examples of the fortune at the BOP and advocates viewing the BOP as a business opportunity. This does not mean that we need to condone blatant violations of human rights, justify oppressive profiteering or other evils of society. Rather, we should be aware of the context of different situations, alternatives to existing practices, as well as feasibility and scalability of perceived ideal solutions. Both slumdog and the millionaire can benefit from mutually agreeable business transactions. Ajai Raho !!

- Krishna Prasad

Sports News:

2009 HTS Tennis Tournament was successfully completed on May 16th at the Lakeside High School. A total of 36 players participated. Ravi Jerath/Dhanik Vyas; Ravi Murugappan/Vinod Chudgar and Krishna Prasad/Tejaswi(TJ) won their respective levels. All the ladies are winners for participating: Sheila Kamath/Pushpa Patel, Manisha Anand/Keja Dhru and Lopa Shah/Neera Young. Ashok Pillai, Mukund Deshpande, Ravi Murugappan and Sharma Pogula were captains of the four teams.

2009 HTS Bowling Tournament will be held on **July 19th** at the Brunswick Bowling Lanes at 9 am. For more information, please contact Aswin Galiara at 706-855-9280.

July 2009

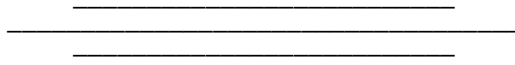
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2 Priest day off	3 Aashadhi Ekadashi 10:30a Priest Busy 7p Satyanarayan Pooja	4
5 10a Hawan shala RSVD-Swadhya	6 7p Shiv Pooja	7	8	9 Priest day off	10 8a priest busy 8am-3pm Temple RSVD 7p Devi Puja	11 12p Priest Busy 7p Ganesh Pooja
12 9a Karthikeya Puja priest busy 10a Hawan shala RSVD-Swadhya 5p priest busy-Temple reserved 5pm-7pm	13 7p Shiv Pooja	14	15	16 Priest day off	17	18 9a BalajiPuja Priest busy @Temple
19 10a 3rd Sunday Puja 10a Hawan shala RSVD-Swadhya	20 7p Shiv Pooja	21	22	23 Priest day off	24 10:30a Priest Busy	25 10:30a Priest Busy
26 Soup Kitchen Priest Day Off 10a Hawan shala RSVD-Swadhya	27 10:30a Priest Busy 7p Shiv Pooja	28	29	30 Priest day off	31 9am-7pm Temple RSVD 10:30a Priest Busy	

August 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30 10a Hawan shala RSVD-Swadhya 3:30p Jain puja 7p Priest Day Off	31 7p Shiv Pooja					1 9a Karthikeya Puja Priest busy@Temple 5p Priest Busy 6-8p Ekadashi Rudrabhishekam
2 8a priest busy-Temple reserved 10a Hawan shala RSVD-Swadhya 10a-noon Rudra Havan	3 7p Shiv Pooja	4 10:30a Priest Busy	5 10:30a Priest Busy 7p Satyanarayan Pooja	6 12p Priest day off	7 7p Devi Puja	8 9a Balaji Puja Priest busy @Temple
9 10a Hawan shala RSVD-Swadhya 10:30a Priest Busy 7p Ganesh Pooja	10 7p Shiv Pooja	11	12 12p Priest day off	13 10:30a Priest Busy 6:30p Krishna Janmasthami Celebration	14	15 Priest Busy
16 10a Hawan shala RSVD-Swadhya 12p 3rd Sunday Puja 7:30p Temple RSVD Jain Group-pratikaman	17 7p Shiv Pooja	18 7:30p Temple RSVD Jain Group pratikaman	19 10:30a Priest Busy 7:30p Temple RSVD Jain Group pratikaman	20 12p Priest day off 7:30p Temple RSVD Jain Group pratikaman	21 7:30p Temple RSVD Jain Group pratikaman	22 8a Temple RSVD Augusta State students 10:30a Priest Busy 3p Temple RSVD Jain Group-Mahavir Jayanti
23 10a Ganesh Chaturthi- Celebration 10a Hawan shala RSVD-Swadhya 5p Temple RSVD Jain Group-Samvatsari	24 7p Shiv Pooja	25	26	27 12p Priest day off	28 Priest Busy	29 Priest Busy 4p India Day- Maxwell theater, Augusta State University

SCHEDULE

Mondays	7pm	Shiv Puja
1 st Friday	7pm	Devi Puja
1 st Saturday	9am	Karthikeya Puja
2 nd Saturday	9am	Shri Venkateshwara Puja
3 rd Sunday	10am	Monthly Puja
2 nd & 4 th Sunday	2 pm	Jain Puja



The Hindu Temple Society
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