

INSPIRATION:
SRILA
PRABHUPADA



“A child is a rare gift given by Krishna, but at the same time a great responsibility; every parent has the responsibility to see that his child grows up Krishna consciousness.”

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Ram Navami in Devasadan Mandir!

By Gita Devi Dasi

Ram Navami is a festival celebrating the birth of Lord Ramachandra. Lord Ram, an incarnation of Lord Vishnu, was born to King Dashratha of Ayodhya, thousands of years ago. Ram Navami falls on the ninth lunar day of the bright fortnight of Chaitra, usually in March or April. It is traditionally a nine-day festival. Devotees stay awake on the ninth night, in anticipation of Lord Ram's birth and the



Lord Rama with Sita Devi and brother Laxman in the forest.

devotees rock his image in cradles to celebrate his birth. A special puja is performed, the next morning. For this festival, temples are decorated and the image of Lord Ram is richly adorned and the Ramayana is read out in temples, during Satsangs. This is one of the five Mahavratas observed since ancient times. Traditional worship begins with chanting Vedic mantras dedicated to Lord Vishnu, and offering flowers and fruits to the god.

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A letter from the Temple President.

Dear Devotees, friends, and Well-Wishers,

We are very happy to bring you this second edition of the monthly newsletter. This past month we celebrated the ecstatic festival of Sri Rama Navami and conducted a youth camp for boys and girls. The young people of this world possess great potential. They are filled with enthusiasm and new ideas. When properly nourished with careful guidance and love, they will be ready to create a revolution. We have seen in the history of Gaudiya Vasinavism how the youth made tremendous contributions. Beginning with the

Supreme Personality of Godhead, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, our movement has attracted scores of young devotees. When Srila Bhaktisidhanta Saraswati Thakura, the Spiritual Master of ISKCON founder Srila Prabhupada, began preaching the message of Lord Chaitanya, such large numbers of young people began joining him to the extent that it attracted the attention of the nationalist leaders of India who were concerned about the youth dedicating their lives to the path of Bhakti rather than fight for India's independence. Srila Prabhupada's following also consisted of tens of thousands of very young people. These devotees

shaped the future of Krishna Consciousness throughout the whole world. Our movement trains young people to be equipped with good character & moral values for the benefit of entire society. It is imperative that boys & girls are trained properly at a young age. Therefore such camps are organized by Detroit ISKCON where all parents can send their kids. Please contact us to see how your kids can also benefit from such programs for not only will they grow up to appreciate the real purpose & values of human life, but will lead the way for generations to follow.
~ Bharath Prabhu



The Nectar Of Mercy...Indradyumna Swami Visits Detroit!

By Anuhya Age 12

The moment he walked in the door, the room suddenly felt transcendental and purified. The beautiful smile he had on his face despite the bitter cold and exhausting travel said it all. We offered fresh rose petals at his lotus feet as he removed his coat and shoes. We gazed up at him as he accepted our welcome card to Devasadan Mandir. A jubilant smile lit up his face as he read the simple words, 'Welcome back to Motown, Maharaja!'

"I guess I really am back where I started, huh?" he laughed. This was H.H. Indradyumna Swami, best known as the traveling preacher or as Swami to the Poles. Born as Brian Tibbitts on May 20, 1949 in Palo Alto, California, he survived a struggle with spinal meningitis at age four. Maharaja grew up as captain of his swim team, and was also in Boy Scouts. An idealist, he later joined the U.S. Marines to stop the spread of communism in Vietnam. Maharaja was discharged a year later as a conscientious objector. In 1970, not long after he was discharged, he met ISKCON devotees right here in Detroit! Maharaja became a member, joining the temple at 8311 East Jefferson. Within a week, he was leading kirtan and distributing spiritual books such as Bhagavad Gita and Srimad Bhagavatam. In December 1971, he was awarded initiation from none other than A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Srila Prabhupad, who gave Maharaja the spiritual name, Indradyumna.

Srila Prabhupad also gave him the instructions, "Preach boldly and have faith in the Holy Names." A mere 8 years later, at the age of 29, he took a vow of lifelong dedication to missionary activities as a celibate monk and entered the renounced order of sannyasa as Indradyumna Swami. Ever since then, Maharaja has been traveling around the world to places where people would think that preaching would be impossible. The wild Amazon Jungle, tribal South Africa, the tropical islands of Mauritius and New Caledonia, freezing Siberia, war-torn Bosnia, and China are just some of those places. Since 1990, Maharaja has been doing a summer tour of festivals along the Polish Baltic Coast that attract over 750,000 people every year. He also does the 3-day Polish Woodstock festival, the biggest festi-

val in all of Europe while writing Diary of a Traveling Preacher. Busy, schedule huh?

This was the amazing person that was standing in front of us. Maharaja slowly made his way up the spiral staircase with Sri Prahlad Prabhu close behind. After refreshing themselves, they got in the car to get to the program Maharaj was going to give. I didn't have the opportunity to go with them



since the van was full. I went later with some Mathajis and we arrived just in time for Maharaja's blissful kirtan. I heard that he had a grand entrance with all of the kids offering flower petals at his lotus feet as a whomper stomper kirtan was going on, as Maharaja would call it. After the program, I rode to Uma Mataji and Siva Prabhu's home with them. As soon as we got there, Maharaja jumped down from the van and ran up the driveway. It's amazing how much energy he has.

"Why are you in such a hurry, Maharaja?" I asked. "To eat the pizza they've made for me!" He yelled in such a jolly way that I was laugh-

ing. "Pizza? At 10:30 at night? Are you sure that's the best idea Maharaja?" came my incredulous reply.

Instead of answering, he called to my Dad, "Saci, your daughter wants to eat pizza at 10:30 at night! Is that all right with you?" We all smiled at Maharaja's childish humor.

After we went inside, he quickly took off his coat and shoes and sat down at the table. I leaned on the counter along with Karthik. Maharaja soon started a conversation. Karthik was very sleepy, so he didn't say much, but I took advantage of the mercy and pushed the fatigue away.

We all carefully hid our smiles at Maharaja's humbleness.

"What are your hobbies, your interests, sports you play?" "Well," I replied. "I like to play tennis, soccer, softball, and basketball. I collect state quarters, and I love to read!! What were your hobbies in your childhood, Maharaja?"

"Well, when I was a little boy, I loved to swim, and I was the captain of my swim team. I would *always* be at the beach! Once, I tried out for the Olympic swim team and missed by a few tenths of a second. It was that close! I was also in the boy scouts. But the main thing I loved to do was swim! What is your most favorite thing to do?"

"I love to READ, Maharaja!! It's the thing I love to do the most!" "Wonderful Saci!" he said to my father as he ate his gulab jamun. "You've raised a reader." Then he turned to me and looked deep into my eyes. "Read Srila Prabhupad's books," he said. "So you can preach and give Srimad Bhagavatam class." I took that to my heart. It felt like a personal instruction.

Yes Maharaja." I said, and this time, I put my heart in it.

Remembering our Acharyas: *Srila Vrindavana Dasa Thakura*

By : Gaurangi Devi Dasi Age 13

Srila Vrindavan Das Thakura, One of the Greatest Vaisnav Acharya of Gaudiya Vaisnav Sampraday, gave us the treasure, named Sri Caitanya Bhagavat, which describes the detail pastime of Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and his associates.

Srila Vrindavan Das Thakura was born on the Krishna Dvadasi of the month of Vaishakh in 1429 of the Saka era. The mother of Srila Vrindavana dasa Thakura's was Sri Narayani devi, the daughter of Sri Nalina Pandit and the niece of Srivasa Pandita.

In his Sri Caitanya Bhagavata, he has described how his mother attained the affectionate favor of Sri Gaurasundara.



Srila Vrindavan Dasa Thakur's Samadhi

Vrindavana Dasa Thakura was born four years after Mahaprabhu took sannyasa. When Mahaprabhu disappeared he couldn't have been more than twenty years old. He was initiated by Sri Nityananda Prabhu and was apparently the last disciple accepted by Sri Nityananda.

In this way Sri Krsna dasa Kaviraja Gosvami has glorified Vrindavana dasa Thakura as the Veda Vyasa of the pastimes of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

There is some dispute as to the exact year of his disappearance, which was likely 1511 Shaka. This month in honor of his disappearance day (April 19), we provide you this article to recognize, one of the many important Thakuras.

Community: Devotee Profile of the Month

By Bhaktin Asmaa

Radha Raman Pr first joined the KC movement in the fall of 1969 on Forest Street in Detroit. He was on Wayne State Campus visiting someone when he heard devotees on the street doing Sankirtan. He introduced himself to the devotees and they talked, their chat resulting in an invitation for him to visit the old temple, which was also located on Forest Street. He took up the invitation and attended his first service where he had prasadam, discussed Vedic philosophy and met unforgettable devotees. After that first visit, he started coming regularly because Krishna Consciousness offered him everything he was looking for: spirituality. In 1970,



Radha Raman Prabhu never stops rockin' his wonderful smile

he met Prabhupad, a meeting which sealed Radha Raman Pr's love for Krishna Consciousness and was a "major magnet." Bhagavan Pr, temple president at that time, was very instrumental in

talking to this man about his spiritual life. Other major Krishna Consciousness attractions for Radha Raman Pr included chanting, kirtan, the philosophy and the explanations for vegetarianism.

Radha Raman Pr's KC path. A story he vividly remembers is when he was having a conversation with Bhagavan Pr and his wife knocked on the door of the room. She started to say something but her husband, Bhagavan Pr., interrupted her and asked her if the matter was life and death. She responded "no" so then he replied "Then go handle it yourself because I am

Announcing Michigan's First Vedic Village!

Dear Friends,

By Krishna's grace, several Detroit devotees have formed a nonprofit organization, called The Michigan Society for Cow Protection (MISCOWP), and have purchased a beautiful 80-acre farm in Whitmore Lake, just a 15 minute drive northwest of Ann Arbor. This project is called Vedic Village, a community based on absolute knowledge, both material and spiritual. For Adiraja, Antariksa and Navadvipa, this is a long time dream finally come true.

Even though this farm project is legally and financially separate from the ISKCON Detroit Temple, we are one in spirit. Our wish is to work closely with the Detroit Temple to more fully present the culture of Krishna consciousness to the people of Michigan and beyond. This farm will help fulfill Srila Prabhupada's vision that ISKCON develop self-sufficient farm communities.

We are very pleased to offer community-supported agriculture (CSA) shares for the congregation and the general public, to help support this project and to receive fresh organic produce for 21 weeks during the growing season. Presently, we are converting seven acres of hay field into beautiful vegetable and fruit

gardens. Every Saturday, anytime from 9am to 6pm, we have "Volunteer Saturday at Vedic Village," when we expect a growing number of people to help us develop this farm. Come to the farm also to enjoy the wonderful landscape and Arms Stream that flows through the middle of the property. We serve a free lunch at noon on Saturdays and everyone is welcome.

You will also meet Dharma and Bhima, our two young Brahman bulls who will be used to till the fields and perform other farm chores. In July, we will purchase five cows, which will be the beginning of Michigan's first goshalla and cow protection program.

This Krishna conscious project will be designed to provide opportunities for hundreds of people to engage in devotional service, people that otherwise may not have been interested in Krishna consciousness. In this way, we trust Krishna will provide abundant new resources for the temple. For more information about Vedic Village and how you can be involved, please contact Adiraja dasa at (313) 823-3815 / tommlano108yahoo.com.

Hare Krishna!



Cover Story Continued...

Excerpts from the "Valmiki Ramayana", praising Lord Ram, are also recited. People of all castes and creeds participate in these gatherings to listen to the stories and their explanations offered by the learned. Lord Ram's devotees fast for nine days with fruit and milk, whilst some fast on the In homes, family members bathe early in the morning. Offerings of fruit and flowers are placed on the family shrine and prayers are recited. A deity of baby Rama is placed in a covered cradle.

At noon, the covering is removed and Naivedya is offered to Lord Rama. This is then, shared amongst the members.



Celebrations begin with a prayer to the Sun early in the morning. At midday, a special prayer is performed. In northern India especially, an event that draws popular participation is the Ramnavami procession. The main attraction in this procession is a gaily-decorated chariot in which four persons are dressed up as Ram, his brother Laxman, his queen Sita and his disciple Hanuman. Several other persons dressed up in ancient costumes accompany the chariot and they pose as Ram's army. The procession is a gusty affair with the participants shouting praises echoing the happy days of Ram's reign.

Om Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram

All are kindly welcome to attend the Love Feast every Sunday at the Temple. Program starts 4:15 pm. Join us for a spiritual rejuvenation with yoga, music, dance, drumming, and a free vegetarian feast



We're on the Web!

**Please check our website for regular updates
www.detroitiskconlive.com**

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