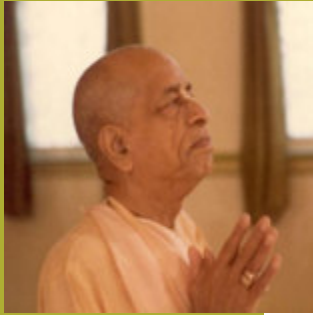


DEVASADAN MONTHLY

JULY 2009



His Holiness Rompada Maharaj Visits Detroit!

“Chanting of Hare Krishna is not meant for achieving any other better thing than Krishna. But when we chant Hare Krishna without any offense, we relish Krishna, the Reservoir of all pleasure.”

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A Night full of 5
Blissful Kirtan

By : Vishaka Devi Dasi

In 1969 as a student at the State University of New York in Buffalo, Srila Rompada Swami finally found the path to the Absolute Truth that he had been searching for when he heard His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada chanting on campus. Rompada Maharaj's journey into Krishna consciousness had begun.

Shortly after being accepted to Medical school, at age twenty-one, Maharaj instead chose a life with ISKCON and in July 1971 became an initiated disciple of Srila Prabhupada. In 1983, Rompada Swami accepted the renounced order of sannyasa.

Since 1978, Rompada Swami has traveled worldwide, presenting the philosophy of Krishna Consciousness. As a guest lecturer in academia, he has spoken to thousands of students across India, the US and Europe.

Currently he is based in New York, and

frequently travels to India and Asia on preaching missions. Since 1986, Rompada Swami has served as an ISKCON diksa guru .



Srila Rompada Swami
leading blissful kirtan

Currently Rompada Swami is the executive chairman of the ISKCON GBC.

By: Nandan Prabhu and Savita Matjai

*bhavad-vidha bhagavatata tirtha-
bhutah svayam vibho
tirthi-kurvanti tirthani svantah-
sthena gadabhrta*

My Lord, devotees like your good self are verily holy places personified. Because you carry the Personality of Godhead within your heart, you turn all places into places of pilgrimage. (SB 1.13.10)

The auspicious presence of His Holiness Srila Rompada Swami, turned Detroit to The Holy Dham.

We were blessed with his generous association from July 16 to Jul 21. Despite Rompada Maharaj's astronomical amount of services as the executive chairman of ISKCON GBC, he continues to extend the unparalleled love and care to one and all. He emphasizes on deep caring for devotees and giving proper training to them, which was exemplified in his own actions by the time he spent with devotees individually and collectively through classes. *Continued of Page 4*

A letter from the Temple President

Dear devotees & friends,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Srila Prabhupada.

On behalf of the management, I'd like to thank everyone that participated in the Temple grounds clean up the past few weeks. Thanks to your efforts, the gardens look very beautiful now. There is still more work to do in preparation for Sri Krishna Janmastami, so another cleanup effort has been planned on Saturday, August 8. If you'd like to participate in this very important service to Sri Sri RadhaKunjabihari, please come to the Temple at 8 AM on August 8 and help us further beautify the Temple.

I'd also like to invite you to the celebrations for Sri Krishna Janmastami on August 13th. Many activities have

been planned for the day, such as a play by children, a boat yatra for Deities & multimedia theatre shows just to name a few. Please check our website for a full list of programs and timings. We will also have a maha-abishekam kalash puja on Janmastami. For a sponsorship of \$501, one can personally bathe the Deities on this most auspicious day with a golden colored kalash. It is a great privilege and honor to be able to bathe the Deities. The kalash (displayed in the picture) is hand beaten, beautifully designed, very ornate and comes in a plush red velvet box. Following the abishek, you can take home the Kalash as a devotional collectible item and display it on your mantle piece or the altar in your puja room. The money from the kalash sponsorships will go towards maintaining the Temple & the highest standards of Deity worship at ISKCON Detroit

that has allowed countless number of people to receive the mercy of Sri Sri RadhaKunjabihari. By the mercy of Srila Prabhupada, founder Acarya of ISKCON, millions of people around the world have derived the greatest benefit by engaging in Krishna's service. At Detroit, we're continuing to give this opportunity to all. The Supreme Lord Krishna will certainly reciprocate with you for your contributions, so we encourage you to make use of this facility and receive the mercy of Krishna. Please call us at **313-331-6740** or email us at contact@detroitiskcon.org to reserve your kalash.

We look forward to seeing you on Janmastami.

Yours in service to Srila Prabhupada,

Bharath Subramanian
Temple President



An Unforgettable Rathyatra

By: Gaurangi Devi Dasi Age 14

Every year all the devotees gain the mercy of Lord Jagannath by pulling his cart during Rathyatra. For the first time this year, I received his glorious mercy two times, in Detroit and Toronto. In Detroit, our Rathyatra is with one cart, and its quiet compared to Toronto, but it's still miraculous. Toronto's Rathyatra had three carts; each deity had their own cart! I've never seen this before, because I've only been to our Rathyatra. Each cart was decorated with flowers and bouquets all over; there was so much detail in the decorations. In front of all the carts there was a small and adorable, Children's Cart which lead Lord Balaram, Mother Subhadra and Lord Jagannath throughout the Rathyatra. The best thing about the whole Rathyatra was that everyone was smiling, enjoying themselves, devotees, non-devotees, and soon-to-be devotees; everyone! And this was all because of Lord Jagannath, he had a great big smile on face, while all the devotees danced and sang for him. There were four buses driving by,

people took pictures, wondered what everyone was doing, and they clapped also receiving Lord Jagannath's mercy. My favorite part out of the



Lord Balarama entering the Tunnel

whole Rathyatra was the tunnel; I will never forget that feeling. Lord Balaram's cart led first, so obviously his cart would enter the tunnel first, everyone was screaming, "Haribol, Haribol, Haribol!" Devotees were jumping up and down, I've never enjoyed dancing so much, but that was

only Round One. Round Two was Mother Subhadra's cart, where everyone danced even more, and screamed louder and louder. Gaura Vani Prabhu led this kirtan and it was just ecstatic, no one stood still. The last cart, Lord Jagannath's cart, everyone put all their energy and jumped as high as they could, sang and screamed till their voices were gone. Seeing this has given me the greatest impact ever, Lord Jagannath is so powerful; because of him everyone who participated in this Rathyatra absolutely enjoyed it.

On the day of Toronto Rathyatra, it was Ekadishi, so the devotees lovingly served Non-ekadishi prasadam for people who weren't fasting, and wonderful Ekadishi prasadam for the people who were fasting. Aside from the Prasadam, there were many enjoyable tents, two entertainment tents, three or four devotional clothing tents, many educational tents, and so much more. The blissful kirtan led by Great Vasinavs for Lord Jagannath filled the air, and concluded this remarkable Rathyatra.

The Hare Krishna Temple Throughout The Years

By: Anusha and Nisha Sharma

There is a kind of magic that surrounds the Hare Krishna Temple; every person within its walls regards one another with utmost respect. If this magic could be somehow bottled up and released into other parts of society, I know for a fact that our world would be a better place. We need individuals with this type of empathy, especially in these hard times. The temple is filled with happy, compassionate, and dedicated people. I have lucky enough to be surrounded by this atmosphere ever since I was an infant. I can still remember walking into the temple gates, eager to discover all the sights and sounds. The temple has changed much since my younger years. , the physical change has not affected the devotees. They still remain just as kind and simple-hearted as they were during my childhood years. These types of people



I hope to remain involved in the temple throughout my adult years. I hope to one day be able to give back to the temple all that it has given to me. The once sparkling ponds no longer hold fish and peacocks no longer roam the temple. The once magnificent playground is no more. However, the physical change has not affected the devotees. They still remain just as kind and simple-hearted as they were during my childhood years. These types of people cannot be found anywhere else. I still receive warm embraces and tokens of kindness such as fragrant garlands, just as I did when I was a child. The place where I once ate prashad as a young girl is now where I serve it to other children reminiscent of myself. I am ever so fortunate to be a part of the Hare Krishna Temple. I hope to remain involved in the temple throughout my adult years. I hope to one day be able to give back to the temple all that it has given to me.

Community: Devotee Profile of the Month

By: Gaurangi Devi Dasi Age 14

This month's community devotee profile is dedicated to our very own Sri Nandanandana Das. Our temple was purchased by His Grace, Srila Prabhupada, who saw the vision of the Devasadan Mandir being the most successful temple in North America. Sri Nandanandana Prabhu has been and still is working and dedicating his time to make Srila Prabhupada's vision possible.

When Sri Nandanandana Prabhu was younger, he was known as Stephen Knapp. As a teenager, he started to think about life; he felt that he didn't fit into this world. Most Karmi teenagers think about having fun and living a care-less life, but Sri Nandanandana Prabhu didn't believe in that.

As Sri Nandanandana Prabhu grew into his older teens, he became a musician; music was the only thing he liked. He began to associate with musicians, artists, and hippies of his area. He found a way to express himself with them, wonder what the real purpose life was, and where he they really fit into this world. That's when his curiosity grew and he began to search answers for the real purpose of life.

Sri Nandanandana Prabhu was born in a Christian family, so he read the Bible from cover to cover. He looked for answers, but he wanted more than it provided. So, he kept searching for the spiritual knowledge he wanted to know. The Bible only showed him what do to or not do, it didn't say all that much regarding higher spiritual knowledge, so he wanted more. So, he studied Judaism, Egyptology, magic, witchcraft, I Ching, palmistry, Tarot, Voodoo, Zen Buddhism, Mysticism, Yoga, and he read the Koran. The Koran didn't focus on theology or spiritual doctrine. It showed God, Allah, who gave punishment with little or no mercy for those

fallen ones who don't follow the Islamic path, but Sri Nandanandana didn't know if that was the really true character of God or not. After studying all these cultures, he concluded all religions were not the same.

In his search for the purpose of life, he came across fear-based religions, but he wanted a path that could give him a natural progressive way to attain a clear perception of the spiritual dimension. That's when he



Sri Nandanandana Prabhu in front of his glorious altar!

read the Bhagavad Gita. It was like the final piece of the puzzle he had been putting together from all the philosophical and spiritual investigations. It gave him exactly what he wanted, which was big boost in spiritual understanding. He continued to read the Upanishads, Vedanata Sutras, Yoga Sutras, and other texts including the Puranas. After reading more Eastern texts, it became clear to him that we all have a connection with God, regardless of what our religions is, or whether we have a connection with a religious institution or church.

Sri Nandanandana found that the Vedic system allows a person to choose his speed that he wanted to advance in, and the level of understanding and the spiritual texts you want to use.

He discovered that the point is the more

spiritual you become; the more you can perceive that which is spiritual. He began to live in an ashram to practice and study the Vedic teachings and learn the way of regulated spiritual life, sadhana, temple rituals and puja, and so forth until he became initiated into the Brahma-Gaudiya sampradaya under the auspices of Srila Prabhupada, and that's when he received the name of Sri Nandanandana dasa. Another

reason why he became a Krishna bhakta is that He is the God of unconditional love, which is something that everyone is looking for.

That is why he has concluded that the Vedic philosophy is the last bastion of deep spiritual truth and knowledge. Nothing offers what it does. Vedic culture essentially takes up where the Western religions leave off. He received the insights he needed to understand the purpose of life, what he was doing there, where he came from, where he was going based on the actions in his life, and how to acquire the highest levels of spiritual perception. It gave him the means to keep going in this world.

Sri Nandanandana Prabhu found something good, positive, and advantageous; he wanted to share it with others. That's why he has written various books on the many aspects of Vedic Culture, so others can learn about it, use it in their life, and benefit from it. He has written about 16 large books and about 10 smaller books all from his research in Vedic cultures. Many Indian Hindus have also appreciated what he does, and have invited him to conferences and to give lectures many times.

Sri Nandanandana Prabhu has become a hero from his writing, and Devasadan Mandir is very lucky to have a charm like him. You can find out more about him and his books and articles at his website at www.stephen-knapp.com

Cover Story Continued.....

During this visit, he gave a three part seminar on the topic of "Clearing the obstacles in the path of Devotional Service". We all come across so many different types of obstacles in our journey to the perfection of human form of life but are fortunate that we have the resources to not only help us identify the obstacles but also remove them fully.



Maharaj classified the obstacles as internal and external and spoke about them separately in two of the sessions. The third session was interactive as Maharaj asked devotees to write their obstacles on a piece of paper and then addressed them one by one. Maharaj mentioned that there are three main internal obstacles:

- a) Asat Trishna - Our desire to enjoy separately from Krishna.
- b) Hriday Daurbalyam - Weakness of heart
- c) Aparadh - Offenses committed while chanting the holy name and serving the Deities

He also elaborated how false ego, which manifests itself as the material conceptions in life, is one of the root of all the other obstacles. One of the solution to the obstacles is to come to a spiritual conception of who we are, which is that we are spirit souls and servants of Krishna.

While addressing the external obstacles, Maharaj identified three as major obstacles:

- a) Fruitive mentality - being motivated by getting a result and considering oneself as the cause of the result.
- b) Mechanical approach - doing the activities in devotional service without feelings
- c) Fault finding - tendency to find shortcomings and mistakes of others instead of seeing our own

For curbing fruitive mentality Maharaj encouraged to regularly reevaluate our purpose of doing devotional service which ideally should be simply for satisfaction of Krishna. Maharaj explained that devotional service is not something we do, but something we receive. He emphasised on cultivating gratitude for what we are receiving by quoting from Sri mad Bhagavatam, "A person who has a simple and grateful heart can easily enter into the kingdom of God".

As always, the question-answer session was one of the most wonderful

part of each session.

The third session covered varying obstacles which Devotees identified. Some of the key solutions were having regulation in life, waking up early in the morning and doing strong sadhana CONSISTENTLY. All through the sessions, it was very inspiring to see that Maharaj not only knows the conclusions of the sastra, but also is expert in dealing with the practical aspects of all situations.

HH Romapada Maharaj also gave three classes on verses from Sri mad Bhagavatam First Canto. In SB 1.19.24 Pariksit Maharaj asks the sages assembled at Naimisaranya to explain what is the duty of people in general and of a dying man in particular. Srila Prabhupada emphasizes in the purport that all of us are dying, either now or after few years. Maharaj was appreciating the content and the mood of the inquiries of Pariksit Maharaj.

Maharaj, also gave one video presentation on Bhagavad Gita Chapter 14 in the Temple as the part of the Sunday feast lecture. The presentation captured the attention of all those who were present. It was nice to hear about the various modes and how everything material can be classified in those three modes.

And that was not all- There was a Special presentation for kids on Krsna's Damodar Leela, which of course the adults enjoyed too. The attractive presentation contained the rare pictures of the lila capturing the devotional expressions of various artists. While transporting us to the Lila by speaking about the pastime in a very absorbed



mood, he also presented some very esoteric details of the pastime as explained by Srila Jiva Goswami in his writings.

The fortunate association of HH Romapada Maharaj was very uplifting and purifying. We eagerly wait for his next visit which he very kindly scheduled during the New year's eve, from 29th Dec 2009 to 2nd Jan 2010.

A Night Full of Blissful Kirtan

By: Syamanandi Dasi, Age 12

When the Devasadan Mandir devotees first heard that a certain Prabhu was coming from Vrindaban to do a summer kirtan tour in the States, they couldn't believe it at first! A few glorious nights full of blissful kirtan? They immediately jumped on the auspicious opportunity and arranged for a few days program here in Detroit. Govinda Prabhu, a professional Mrdangam player from Vrindaban, is originally from Europe. He was part of Aindra Prabhu's 24 Hour Kirtan in Vrindaban itself. He agreed to come to the Devasadan Mandir for a few days, to the devotees' great pleasure and joy.



The programs went very well and many devotees attended; hungry for the auspicious sound of KC kirtan. Govinda Prabhu resided here for a grand total of 4 days, with 4 glorious programs; one at the Balaji Temple, another at H.G. Venugopal Prabhu's new house, and two more at the temple. The devotees were rejuvenated with the glorious kirtans, and many jumped up to dance in bliss.

Everyone here at Devasadan Mandir is very grateful and thankful for Govinda Prabhu's visit and would like to express their heartfelt gratitude. Thank you so much for stopping be in Detroit Govinda Prabhu! Haribol!

***Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare
Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare***

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 music, dance, drumming, and a free vegetarian feast

**Temple Address:
The Fisher Mansion
383 Lenox St
Detroit, MI 48215**

**Telephone:
313-331-6740**

We're on the Web!

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

**For questions, comments, concerns regarding this newsletter, or to contribute articles, please contact the editors at:
sriradhakunjahari@gmail.com**

