



# आराधना

## Aradhana

A Publication of the Hindu Society of Greater Cincinnati  
Devdham of North America™

Margshish/Paush  
Vikram Samvat, 2064  
January 2008

Happy New Year

Website: [www.cincinnatiemple.com](http://www.cincinnatiemple.com)  
Email: [hindusociety@fuse.net](mailto:hindusociety@fuse.net)  
Phone: 513-528-3714

### MAKARSANKRANTI OR UTTARAYAN

*Compiled by Meena Mehta*

Makar Sankranti is one of the most auspicious days for the Hindus, and is celebrated all over the country in myriad cultural forms, with great devotion, fervor & gaiety. Lakhs of people take a dip in places like Ganga Sagar & Prayag and pray to Lord Sun. It is celebrated with pomp in southern parts of the country as Pongal, and in Punjab is celebrated as Lohri & Maghi. Gujarati's not only look reverentially up to the sun, but also offer thousands of their colorful oblations in the form of beautiful kites all over the skyline. They may be trying to reach up to their glorious God or bring about greater proximity with the one who represents the best. It is a day for which Bhishm Pitamah kept waiting to leave his mortal coil.

Makar in Sanskrit means Capricorn and Sankranti means to go from one place to another, one meets another, to change direction or transition. The time when the sun changes its direction from one constellation of the zodiac to another is known as Sankranti.

There are 12 signs of the zodiac. Therefore correspondingly there are 12 Sankrantis. They are given names according to the position of the sun in relation to the signs of the zodiac. Each of the 12 Sankrantis has its relevant importance but two of them are most prominent, the Mesh (Aries) Sankranti and the most important, the Makar (Capricorn) Sankranti.

#### Mesh Sankranti

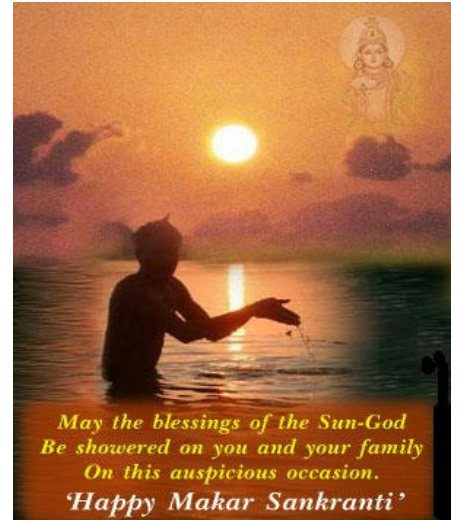
The solar year commences when the sun is in Mesh (Aries), the first sign of the zodiac. This transition is called Mesh Sankranti. During this auspicious period, great deal of merits are acquired by performing Havan (Yajna or Sacred Fire ceremony), Japa (repetition of Mantra or God's name), Shraddha, Charity etc. Householders top up their grain jars and families start wedding preparations for their sons and daughters.

#### Makar Sankranti

The Makar Sankranti is of a great social and religious importance. Transition of the Sun from Sagittarius to Capricorn, during the winter solstice in the northern hemisphere is known as Makar Sankranti. From this day begins the six-month long Uttarayan, (Northern Transition) which is considered very auspicious for attaining higher worlds hereafter.

The traditional Indian calendar is based on lunar (moon) positions and Western calendar is based on solar (sun) positions. Therefore the Western dates for all Hindu festivals do change but that of Makar Sankranti always remains the same which is 14th January. Makar Sankranti is celebrated in the Hindu calendar month of Magha. After this day the days gradually lengthened in the northern hemisphere.

Cont'd on page 7



May the blessings of the Sun-God  
Be showered on you and your family  
On this auspicious occasion.  
'Happy Makar Sankranti'

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Note: If you or someone you know, is not receiving ARADHANA, or if you need a change in address, please contact  
Mr. Mohan Chopra at 859-331-2416.

Deadline for submission of articles and advertisements for the next issue is January 10th, 2008

## HSGC TEMPLE INFORMATION

<div>EXECUTIVE COUNCIL 2008</div> <div>President:</div> <div>Raj Bodalia583-0184</div> <div>V. President:</div> <div>Rameshwar Dayal474-4051</div> <div>Secretary:</div> <div>Siva Shivaganeshan563-2901</div> <div>Treasurer:</div> <div>Amar Sharma742-5725</div> <div>COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS</div> <div>Pooja Committee:</div> <div>Bobba Choudhary984-6074</div> <div>Communications/Editor:</div> <div>Meena Mehta574-6763</div> <div>email: minaash@hotmail.com</div> <div>Member:</div> <div>Aashish Shah942-8264</div> <div>email: aashish.shah@yahoo.com</div> <div>Membership &amp; Fundraising:</div> <div>Hari Maddali985-9255</div> <div>Property Management &amp; Maintenance:</div> <div>Shiv Sharma459-9520</div> <div>Cultural Activitie:</div> <div>Jyoti Desai745-0876</div> <div>Religious Education &amp; Youth Activities:</div> <div>Manju Gupta232-3331</div> <div>Long Range Planning:</div> <div>Jitu Patel459-8900</div> <div>Youth Member:</div> <div>Surbhi Sharma807-5081</div> <div>Priests:</div> <div>Acharya Kailash Sharma770-0705</div> <div>Sri Devnathan Sivachar528-4831</div> <div>Acharya Chakreshwar Sharma528-0901</div> <div>Attorney:</div> <div>Aronoff, Rosen &amp; Hunt241-0400</div> <div>Temple Manager:</div> <div>Laxmi Srivastava474-0533</div> <div>Accountant: Open</div>	<div>RELIGIOUS DISCOURSE</div> <div>Sundays 12:15 - 12:45 PM</div> <div>First Sunday :Upanishads</div> <div>Second Sunday :ChildrenProgram</div> <div>Third Sunday :Sunder Kand Path</div> <div>Fourth Sunday :Shri Ganesh</div> <div>Atharvshirsha Path</div> <div>Fifth Sunday :Open (Please Sug-gest)</div> <div>Members of the community are invited to speak on topics related to Hindu religion, Philosophy, culture, reformation, Gurus, self-preservation, etc. If you would like to talk or like to suggest someone who may be interested, , please call Bobba Chaudhary at 513-984-6074</div> <div>SPONSORS FOR SUNDAY Pooja</div> <div>Devotees are requested to sit-in Sunday Pooja as well as bring Prasad and Lunch. You may wish to use this occasion to celebrate important events such as wedding anniversaries, birthdays, ishta devata pooja, graduation, and other memorable days. Events can be hosted by individuals, families, groups of families or organizations. Please reserve your Sunday of choice ASAP by putting your name and phone-no in the calendar at the temple and calling Bobba Chaudhary at (513) 984-6074</div> <div>TEMPLE SCHEDULE</div> <div>Monday - Friday :9:00AM-12:00 Noon</div> <div>5:00 PM - 8:00 PM</div> <div>Saturday, Sunday &amp; US Holidays9:00 AM - 8:00 PM</div> <div>SPECIAL PROGRAM ON WEEKENDS</div> <div>9:15 - 9:30 A.M.Suprabhatam</div> <div>9:30 - 11:00 A.M.Daily pooja of Temple Deities</div> <div>11 :00 - 11:30 A.MSponsored Pooja</div> <div>11 : 30 - 12:15 A.MBhajan</div> <div>12 : 15 -12:45 P.M.Religious discourse</div> <div>12:45-1:00 P.M.Birthday and Anniversary pooja and announcement</div> <div>1 : 00 P.M.Aarti</div> <div>Please Donate Generously for your Temple</div> <div>Your Temple needs</div> <div>1. Sponsors for flower \$50/week</div> <div>2. Sponsors for Sunday pooja</div> <div>3.Your temple needs your support</div>	<div>2008 POOJA COMMITTEE &amp; RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES MEMBERS</div> <div>To participate in/ sponsor please contact a Pooja Committee chairperson &amp; member or Temple.</div> <div>Bobba Choudhary:984-6074</div> <div>Acharya Kailash. Sharma770-0705</div> <div>Pandit Devnath Sivachar528-4831</div> <div>Acharya Chakreshwar Sharma528-0901</div> <div>Hindu Temple:528-3714</div> <div>Madhu Sharma232-9991</div> <div>Kiran Dayal474-4051</div> <div>Suchitra Mishra573-9775</div> <div>Rani Dhameja984-5777</div> <div>Sameer Rao793-5821</div> <div>Meena Karamchandani683-9454</div> <div>Kalpana Srivastava233-9184</div> <div>Uma Sanguai793-9384</div> <div>Muralee573-0550</div> <div>Minati Bhattacharya272-0361</div> <div>Vasundhra Dasari777-3353</div> <div>Anee Deka336-9554</div> <div>Manju Gupta232-3331</div> <div>Temple Manager's Committees</div> <div>Laxmi S. Srivastava- Temple Manager474-0533</div> <div>1.Office Manager</div> <div>Mr. Mohan Chopra</div> <div>2. I/C Swami Lectures</div> <div>Laxmi S. Srivastava</div> <div>Vinay Kumar</div> <div>Devdas Mukerjee</div> <div>Meena Mehta</div> <div>Bobba Choudhary</div> <div>3. Temple Data Base</div> <div>Nandkumar Khemchandani</div> <div>Mohan Chopra</div> <div>Laxmi S. Srivastava</div> <div>4. Anniversary &amp; Birthday Data</div> <div>Raj &amp; Shakuntla Agarwal</div> <div>5. E-mail Data</div> <div>Pradeep Goyal</div> <div>Nandkumar Khemchandani</div> <div>6. Membership &amp; Gift Shop</div> <div>Madhu Sharma</div> <div>Meena Sondhi</div> <div>7. Computer Tech Support</div> <div>Sreedhar Suvarana</div> <div>Aashish Shah</div> <div>8. Financial Data</div> <div>Amar Sharma</div> <div>Raj Bodalia</div> <div>Laxmi S. Srivastava</div> <div>9. I/C Temple Web site</div> <div>Bharat Vala</div> <div>Anand Narayana</div> <div>Khush Karamchandani</div> <div>Laxmi S. Srivastava</div> <div>10. I/C Temple Calendar</div> <div>Meena Mehta</div> <div>Ashvin Mehta</div> <div>Acharya Kailash Sharma</div> <div>Sri Devnathan Sivachar</div> <div>11. I/C Volunter Services</div> <div>Vijay Kumar</div> <div>Laxmi S. Srivastava</div>
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## Pooja Information

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### Pooja Committee Announcement:

To schedule a Pooja or to rent a temple hall (lower level )  
please contact Babba Chaudhury at 984-6074

1. **Archana** performed during temple hours by sponsorship. No Archana on Sundays between 11 a.m.-1 p.m.
2. **Outside poojas** and other religious services will be conducted by appointment only.
3. To **schedule any poojas** please contact Pooja Committee chairperson at least one week in advance.
4. If you would like to bring **food and prasad** in the temple, Please contact Pooja Committee chairperson .
5. **Cancellations** of pooja should be done 3 days in advance or else the full fee for the pooja will be charged

### RATES FOR POOJA & PRIEST SERVICES |

Effective March 2007

SERVICE	IN	OUTSIDE
	TEMPLE	TEMPLE
Abhishekam (All Deities)	\$101.00	Aksharabhyas
	\$101.00	\$151.00
Anna-Prashanam	\$101.00	\$151.00
Ashtottharam (108) Archana	\$21.00	---
AyushyaHomam/B'day Celebration	\$101.00	\$151.00
Ground Breaking Ceremony	---	\$151.00
Griha Pravesh	---	\$151.00
Kalayana Uthsava (Lord Ram/ Sita)	\$121.00	- -
Kesh Khandan (Churakaran)	\$101.00	\$151.00
Nam-Karan	\$101.00	\$151.00
Navagraha Pooja	\$101.00	\$151.00
Nischitartham (Engagement)	\$151.00	\$251.00
Nitya (1 Day) Kainkaryam (Seva)	\$101.00	---
Poolangi Seva (With Flowers)- (Only During Off Winter Season)	\$101.00	---
Sahasranama (1008) Archana	\$51.00	---
Sathyanarayana Pooja	\$101.00	\$151.00
Seemantham	\$101.00	\$151.00
Devi Jagaran	\$75.00	\$101.00
Akhand Ramayan Paath	---	\$151.00
Shashti Poorthi (60th B'day Celeb.)	\$101.00	\$151.00
Anniversary celebration	\$101.00	\$151.00
Suprabhat Seva	\$21.00	---
Unjal (Swing) Seva	\$31.00	---
Upakarma (thread changing)	\$51.00	---
Upanayam/Brahmopadesham/ Thread Ceremony	\$151.00	\$251.00
Vahan Pooja	\$51.00	---
Yearly Shradham (Barkhi)	\$101.00	\$151.00
Wedding	\$301.00	\$501.00

### SPECIAL POOJA RATE

Rates for Mata Ki Chauki performed at another temple will be 15% of the money collected at the temple or a minimum of \$ 501.00.

1. Poojas performed by priests outside the temple will be rated according to the number of poojas performed.
2. 40 Cents/Miles for Travel expanse to the Priest to perform pooja at your home.

Rates are subject to change without notice. Rates of Poojas out of Greater Cincinnati will be \$100.00 more than the rates of outside pooja within greater Cincinnati area.

### Temple Rental: Lower Floor Only

	Full day	1/2 day
M-Th. (except holidays)	\$301	\$151
Fri., Sat & Holidays	\$501	\$351
<b><u>Sunday after 3PM only</u></b>		<b>\$351</b>

**Note:** For half day select one of the two.

8:00 AM - 2 PM OR 4PM - 11 PM

Temple rental applies to all private reservations for those events/poojas that are performed by private parties and not announced in the temple.

**Security/ Cleaning deposit:** \$151 required. This deposit will be forfeited if the basement hall bathrooms and kitchen area are not cleaned by the party renting the place.

**NOTE: To schedule a Pooja or to rent a temple hall (lower level ) please contact pooja Committee chairperson only.**

## Regular Weekly & Monthly Events at the Temple

### Monthly Navgrah Pooja

Every first Saturday of the Month  
January 5th Saturday 3 pm to 5:30 pm  
Sponsors needed for Pooja \$51.00  
For Details please call

Bobba Choudhary: 984-6074  
Sri Devnathanji: 528-4831 Temple priests: 528-3714

### Monthly Murugan Abhishekham /Pooja

Every second Saturday of the Month  
January 12th Saturday 10.30am to 1:00pm  
**Sponsored by Murugan Group.**

**Please contact** Bobba Choudhary :984-6074.

### Monthly Satya Narayan Pooja

On Every Purnima of the Month  
January 22nd Saturday 5:30 pm to 8:00pm  
**Sponsorship \$ 51.00**

To sponsor pooja please call Bobba Choudhary: 984-6074  
Temple priests: 528-3714

### Monthly Sundar Kand Path

January 6th Sunday 10:30 am  
Bobba Choudhary: 984-6074 Acharya Kailashji: 770-0705  
Temple Priests: 528-3714

### Monthly Shri Ganesh Pooja & Shri Ganesh Atharvshirsha Path

Every 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the month: January 27th Sunday  
This pooja is dedicated to each month's  
Sankashti Chaturthi to Lord Ganesh.

**For more information & Sponsor the pooja please call**

Anuradha Kulkarni: 271-2749 Uma Sangvai: 793-9384  
Kiran Dayal: 474-4051 Temple Priests: 528-3714

### Monthly ABHISHEKAM/KALYANOTSAVAM FOR LORD SRI VENKATESWARA

On 4th Saturday of each month from 10:30 AM-12:30PM.  
**To sponsor and details please call any of the following:**  
Anand Konda: 481-4119 Vasundhara Dasari: 777-3353  
Suseela Paturi: 867-8591 Vicheta Pemmaraju: 398-9833  
Sailaja Gannamraj: 697-1412 Usha Indrakanti: 583-5995

### Weekly Shiv Mahiman Stotram

Every Monday at 6:30pm

### Weekly Hanuman Chalisa Path

Every Tuesday at 6:30pm  
To sponsor pooja please call Bobba Choudhary: 984-6074  
Temple priests: 528-3714

### Weekly Vishnu Sahasranaam Parayana

Vishnu Sahasranaama Parayana (chanting) will now take  
place Every Thursday at 7:00 pm in the temple.  
Please join us for the chanting.  
**For more information, please contact the priest at 528-3714**

### Weekly Venkateswar Pooja

Every Friday at 6:30pm  
To sponsor pooja please call Bobba Choudhary: 984-6074  
Temple priests: 528-3714

## Bhagavad - Geeta Class

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Join us in understanding and appreciating the timeless wisdom of the Bhagavad-Geeta.

**When: Fourth Sunday of the month, 11am to 12:45pm**

**Where: The Hindu Temple**

**Taught by: Sri Koti Sreekrishna,**

Notes with transliteration guide (Sanskrit to English) provided.

**Contact**

**Manju Gupta: 232 - 3331 Vasanta Vemuri: 232- 5767**



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# Upcoming Events at the Temple

## January 2008 Highlights

January 1 Tuesday New Year's Day Havan  
 January 6 Sunday Sundarkand Path  
 January 14 Monday Makarsankranti  
 January 20 Sunday Makarsankranti Celebration  
 January 22 Tuesday Shri SatyaNarayan Pooja  
 Thai Poosam  
 January 26 Saturday Republic Day of India

Please refer to Page 2 for regular weekly and monthly pooja and path.

## February 2008 Events

February 10 Sunday Sundarkand Path  
 February 11 Monday Vasant Panchami  
 February 17 Sunday Vasant Panchami Celebration  
 February 20 Wednesday Shri SatyaNarayan Pooja  
 Omasimagam

## New Year Celebration

January 1, 2008

Ganesh Puja & Havan 11am to 12:30

Please come and start new year with blessings of Lord Ganesh.

For Details Please Call:  
 Temple: 513-528-3714

## Sunder Kand Path

January 6th Sunday 10 :30 am to 1 pm

Sunder kand path will be on first Sunday in  
 January 2008 instead of third Sunday due to  
 Makar Sankranti Celebration.

## EXECUTIVE COUNCIL 2008

General body meeting and the election for new Executive Council 2008 was held on Sunday December 9, 2007

Following is the new Executive Council 2008

**President:** Raj Bodalia

**V. President:** Rameshwar Dayal

**Secretary:** Siva Shivaganeshan

**Treasurer:** Amar Sharma

**Pooja Committee:** Bobba Choudhary

**Communications/Editor:** Meena Mehta

**Cultural Activitie:** Jyoti Desai

**Membership & Fundraising:** Hari Maddali

**Property Management & Maintenance:** Shiv Sharma

**Religious Education & Youth Activities:** Manju Gupta

**Long Range Planning:** Jitu Patel

**Youth Member:** Surbhi Sharma

**MAY GOD BLESS YOU ALL ON THIS HAPPY OCCASION &  
 BRING HAPINESS AND PROSPERITY IN YEAR 2007**

## Marriage Anniversaries (January)\*

Nandkumar Khemchandani  
 Tushar Manek  
 Arun Mehta  
 Anand Narayana  
 Niranjan Ramji  
 Vijaya Samadhi  
 Vijay Sharma  
 Malay Srivastava  
 Kedar Verma

## Birthday Anniversaries (January)\*\*

Prabha Batra	Vivek Surya Bhamidipati
Niharika Bhatnagar	Rishi Bhatnagar
Gautham Bhoomready	Sagoree Chatterjee
Vinoo Cholera	Nithya Devanathan
Suvomita Ghosh	Siddarth Goyal
Babu Gupta	Govind Gupta
Raneshwar Gupta	Ravi Hasandka
Nutan Kamat	Vikas Kothari
Rahul Kukreti	Yash Kumar
Vidya Nagarajan	Mahesh Naik
Maureen Nanavati	Naresh Nayak
Child 1 Patel	T.M. Rajkumar
Eshwar Ramdas	Rohit Rao
Younus Samadi	Balu Sekar
Rekha Shankar	Sonal Shankar
Ashwini Sharma	Pankaj Sharma
Seema Sharma	Sheela Agarwal
Amit Srivastava	Rhea Srivastava
Pooja Vadin	Bharat Vela
Anush Venkatesan	Ashish Verma
Subhodh Wadhwa	

Many Happy Returns of the Day

\*(Celebrated on the first Sunday of each month in the temple)

\*\* (Celebrated on the second Sunday of each month in the temple)

If you would like to include your name in the above lists

Please call Raj and Shakuntala Agarwal at 733-1537.



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*- Jenny Reno (Margaret Stevens)*

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*- Mr. & Mrs Nils and  
Natalya Ekberg*

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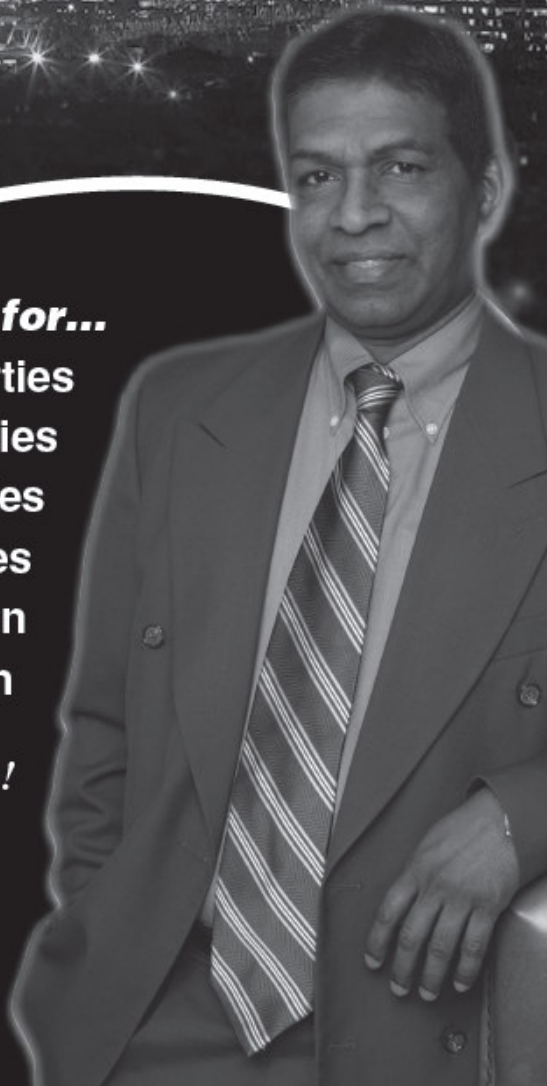
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### Religious Significance and Legends:

1. The Puranas write that on this day Sun visits the house of his son Shani (Saturn), who is the Swami of Makar (Capricorn). The father & son do not normally get along very well. In spite of all the differences between them Sungod makes a point to visit the son Shani, on this day. The father Sungod, in fact himself comes to his son's house, for a month. This day symbolizes the importance of special relationship between a father & son. It is the son who has the responsibility to carry forward his fathers dream and continue the family name.
2. From Uttarayan also called Devayan, starts the 'day' of Devatas, while Dakshinayan (Southern Transition of Sun) also called Pitrayan, is said to be the 'night' of Devatas, Most auspicious events are performed during Uttarayan time..
3. It was on this day when Lord Vishnu ended the ever increasing terrorism of the Asuras by finishing them off and burying their heads under the Mandar Parvat. This signifies the end of negativities and beginning of an era of righteous actions and living.
4. The great savior of his ancestors, Maharaj Bhagirath, did great Tapasya (penance) to bring Gangaji down on the earth for the redemption of 60,000 sons of Maharaj Sagar, who were burnt to ashes at the Kapil Muni Ashram, near the present day Ganga Sagar. It was on this day that Bhagirath finally did Tarpan with the Ganges water for his unfortunate ancestors and thereby liberated them from the curse. After visiting the Patala for the redemption of the curse of Bhagirath's ancestors Gangaji finally merged in the Sagar (Ocean). Even today a very big Ganga Sagar Mela is organized every year on this day at the confluence of River Ganges and the Bay of Bengal. Thousands of people take dip in the water and do Tarpan for their ancestors.

There is another spiritually symbolic aspect of this story. The 60,000 cursed son of Maharaj Sagar who represent our thoughts, became dull & very weak and almost dead, because of their uncivilized and blind ambition. Redemption of such people is only by the waters of Gangaji, brought down from heaven to earth with the first landing onto high Himalayas and then on the earth surface, by observing great Tapasya. This represents determination, hard work and dedication to receive the redeeming Brahma-Vidya, which alone enlightens, enthuses & enlivens the life of anyone.

5. The Bhagavad Geeta mentions the importance of the northern path of the sun at the time of death. This period is considered an auspicious time to conduct any religious practices and even death..

The great grandsire Bhishm of Mahabharata chose to die during this period. Bhishm fell to the arrows of Arjun. With his boon to choose the time of his death, he waited on a bed of arrows to depart from this world only during this period. It is believed that those who die during this period have no rebirth

### Celebration through out India

This festival popularly called Sankrant is celebrated differently in different parts of India.

In **Uttar Pradesh**, Sankrant is called 'Khichiri'. Taking a dip in the holy rivers on this day is regarded as most auspicious. A big one-month long 'Magha-Mela' fair begins at Prayag (Allahabad) on this occasion. Apart from Triveni, bathing rituals also take place at many places like Haridvar and Garh Mukteshwar in Uttar Pradesh, and Patna in Bihar.

In **Bengal** every year a very big Mela is held at Ganga Sagar where the river Ganga is believed to have dived into the nether region and vivified the ashes of the sixty thousand ancestors of King Bhagirath. This mela is attended by a large number of pilgrims from all over the country.

In **TamilNadu** Sankranti is known by the name of **Pongal**, which takes its name from the surging of rice boiled in a pot of milk, and this festival has more significance than even Diwali. It is very popular particularly amongst farmers. Rice and pulses cooked together in ghee and milk is offered to the family deity after the ritual worship. "Share what you have with all"—this is the clarion call of the Pongal festival.

In **Andhra Pradesh**, it is celebrated as a three-day harvest festival **Pongal**. It is a big event for the people of Andhra Pradesh. The Telugus call it '**Pedda Panduga**' meaning big festival. The whole event lasts for four days; the first day is called Bhogi, the second day Sankranti, the third day Kanuma and the fourth day, Mukkanuma.

In **Karnataka**, the Sankranti is also known as **Pongal** It is marked by visiting one's friends and relatives to exchange greetings, and by the preparation of a dish called Ellu (made with sesame seeds, coconuts, sugar blocks, etc). A common custom found across Karnataka is the exchange of sugarcane pieces and Ellu with one's neighbors, friends and relatives and greet each other with the words " "Ellu bella thindu, Olle Maathu Aadu" (Eat sesame seeds and speak only good). The significance of this exchange is that sweetness should prevail in all the dealings. The cows and bullocks are gaily decorated and fed 'Pongal'- a sweet preparation of rice. Special prayers are offered. In the evening, the cattle are led out in procession to the beat of drums and music. In the night a bonfire is lit and the animals are made to jump over the fire.

Cont'd on Page 8

## Cont'd from page 7

In **Maharashtra** on the Sankranti day people exchange multi-colored tilgud made from Til (sesame seeds) and sugar and Til-laddus made from Til and jiggery. Til-polis are offered for lunch. While exchanging Tilguls as tokens of goodwill people greet each other saying – 'til-gul ghya, god god bola' meaning 'accept these tilguls and speak sweet words'. The under-lying thought in the custom is to forget the past ill-feelings and hostilities and resolve to speak sweet and remain friends. This is a special day for the women in Maharashtra when married women are invited for a get-together called 'Haldi-Kumkum' and given gifts of any utensil, which the woman of the house purchases on that day.

In **Gujarat** Sankrant is observed more or less in the same manner as in Maharashtra but with a difference that in Gujarat there is a custom of giving gifts to relatives. The elders in the family give gifts to the younger members of the family. The Gujarati Pandits on this auspicious day grant scholarships to students for higher studies in astrology and philosophy. This festival thus helps the maintenance of social relationships within the family, caste and community. Kite flying has been associated with this festival in a big way. It has become an internationally well-known event.

In **Punjab** where December and January are the coldest months of the year, huge bonfires are lit on the eve of Sankrant and is celebrated as "LOHARI". Sweets, sugarcane and rice are thrown in the bonfires, around which friends and relatives gather together. The following day is celebrated as MAGHI. The Punjabi's dance their famous Bhangra dance till they get exhausted. The celebration continues further by eating the sumptuous food that is specially prepared for the occasion.

In **Kerala** the 40 days anushthana by the devotees of Ayyappa ends on this day in **Sabarimala** with a big festival.

In **Madya Pradesh** and **Bundelkhand** this festival of Sankrant is known by the name **Sakarati** and is celebrated with great pomp & merriment accompanied by lot of sweets.

In **Assam**, the festival is celebrated as **Bhogali Bihu**.

Many **tribal communities** in India start their New Year from the day of Sankrant by lighting bonfires, dancing and eating their particular dishes sitting together. The Bhuya tribal of Orissa have their **Maghyatra** in which small home-made articles are put for sale.

In the **coastal regions**, it is a harvest festival dedicated to **Indra**.

Thus, the Makar Sankranti is celebrated throughout India as a harvest festival. It is a way of giving thanks to the elements of nature that help mankind. This is the period when the winter recedes, paving the way for the summer. It is the time the farmers bring home their harvest. In the coastal regions, it is a harvest festival dedicated to Indra. In North India, a ritual bath in the river is important on this day. Khichiri is eaten and given away as charity, and People also distribute rice and lentils to the poor and needy. In Maharashtra, a special dish called Tilgul and laddoos made of jiggery and Sesame seed, the chief crop of the season, is popular. In Gujarat it is celebrated as the Kite flying day. From Makar Sankranti onwards when the sun is traveling northwards, innumerable auspicious things start happening. Climate and atmosphere improve. It is noted that the Children born during this period are naturally progressive, well mannered, pleasant and of noble disposition.

Call it Makar Sankranti; Sankrant, Lohri, Pongal, Khichiri Sankranti, Khichadi Sankranti, or Til Sankranti the festival conveys the same message 'the bond of brotherhood and the spirit of oneness should prevail despite all odds'.

## Deities' Garland Donation

The expenses for the Garlands for Deities are donated by the devotees for the past 5 years. Following is the list of donors for the year 2008.

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Lords Radha Krishna:	Raghu and Rekha Tadepalli
Lord Srinadh:	Jitu and Usha Patel
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## *To our volunteers and Devotees*

### **“Temples are the Socio-Religious Centers of the Community”.**

Many people such as Rishis, Swamijis, Saints, Acharyas, Panditajis, leaders including Mahatma Gandhi have declared this. This is true at any time, any place and in any religion in the history of human race. We all have experienced it and our community has proved it.

We all go to the temple, under the umbrella of ‘The Hindu Society of Greater Cincinnati’, for Darshan and devotion. Among many, one way of devotion is to SERVE God, temple, community and people any way you can. It does not matter which way at all. You are always noticed recognized and appreciated.

Your service can be from sweeping the floor or rolling the rugs to performing Pooja or Havan and everything in between.

Many of you have performed and participated volunteering various services. It is practically impossible for us to list all the volunteers’ names without missing a single person and also the list will be a mile long because there are so many volunteers serving the temple. Therefore please forgive us if I list here, only the names of all the committees and groups and not the names of all or individual volunteer/s for the year 2007.

Although , I like to mention one name here who is not on any committee or under any group but he is directly involved with the Aradhana. He is John Harman, the printer of Aradhana who not only prints the Aradhana on demand but reads it with great interest.

#### **List of committees and groups-2007 is as follow:**

Priests: Kailash Sharma, Devnathan Sivachar and Chakreshwar Sharma who arrived here on Nov.15 ‘07

Members of the Executive Council

Pooja and Religious Activity Committee

Manager’s committee which consists of eleven subcommittees

Ladies who provide variety of finger leaking regional Prasad/Lunch every Sunday

Devotees who sponsors weekly, monthly and Sunday special Poojas, great festivals and celebrations

Devotees who sponsor fresh flower Haar (garlands) for deities

Appointed and volunteer photographer/s

Temple Bhajan Mandali (Group)

Birthdays and Anniversary committee maintains and updates people’s list

The Businesses and experts in the community, who extend their helping hands to run HSGC-Business smoothly

All energetic young people who help to arrange, rearrange and clean the lunch hall every time when it’s needed

All young parents who bring their children to the temple to expose and educate them of our culture and religion.

I urge you to bring them to our Sunday school program to give them methodical, cultural and religious, education.

HSGC appreciates your time, energy and devotion.

Thank you very much to all of you. Please continue your services, It will be greatly appreciated. Let us know if you want to specially, recognize someone or a group.

The list is not closed. It still can grow. Let us know if we have missed out any group/s. Once again we thank you all very much for your services to our/your temple and hope that you would continue to do so for this New year of 2008 in the future.

On behalf of HSGC: Meena Mehta

### **Hindu Society of Greater Cincinnati**

#### **Minutes of November 04, 2007 Executive Council Meeting**

Member Present: Raj Bodalia, Ramesh Dayal, Prem Garg, Amar Sharma, Anil Jindal, Jitu Patel, Bobba Choudary, and Siva Sivaganesan.

Meeting started at 10:00 AM

Membership list was discussed. It was agreed that the current list of permanent members will be published in the upcoming issue of Aradhana.

#### **Maintenance issues:**

Currently on-going maintenance repair work is expected to be completed by the end of Nov., 2007.

The question who has the responsibility of coordinating with the lady hired to clean the temple. It was agreed that

Pooja Committee chair will designate a priest to

be in charge of this coordination to ensure clean up-keep of

both floors of the temple building. The priest will in turn will keep the Maintenance Chairperson informed.

It was noted that the front gate is fixed and currently in operation, but it needs more extensive repair to properly secure its long-term operation.

Plan and funding issues involving a canopy to be installed adjoining the steps in front and side of the temple entrance were discussed. A proposal for raising a sum of \$15,000 for this purpose designating this as a Special Project was approved, but contingent on the approval of a plan for the canopy.

HSGC Secretary: Siva Shivaganeshan

## *Community Corner*

### **Asian Community Alliance, Inc.**

The Asian Community Alliance, Inc. (ACA) is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization that brings together resources to provide quality, compassionate and culturally sensitive services to the Asian Communities in the Greater Cincinnati Region.

### **ACA Work in the Community**

Direct families/individuals to social, legal, or educational service providers when they encounter issues or need advice and information.

Providing a neutral avenue through which organizations are able to offer programs to area Asian populations.

Collaborating with the diverse segments of the local Asian communities. Raising awareness of issues that concern Asian populations. Cultivate partnerships with Asian organizations that serve the local populations;

During 2007, ACA in partnership with Northern Kentucky University held an Asian Summit to gather information from Asian leaders about the needs of our growing Asian community. That Summit resulted in the identification of several concerns among the area Asian populations including immigration, health including health insurance, access to public services, and lack of Asian representation.

Further, ACA developed and began distribution of an **Asian Community Resource Guide** to assist Asian families arriving here in the Cincinnati region. This guide offers a wide range of information useful in becoming a part of this community. Topics in the guide include Schooling, US medical system, Legal information and services, Immigration, Social Service Organizations, Asian Embassies in the United States, Career Opportunities, Language Interpreters, Asian Community Organizations, and much more.

The resource directory is available for sale; for more information please contact Neena Samant,

Fund Raising Director at [neena.samant@gmail.com](mailto:neena.samant@gmail.com).

During the last year, ACA's website ([www.acacinci.org](http://www.acacinci.org)) opened, enabling Asians in Cincinnati to become familiar with the organization and also allowing the Asian Communities to interact with each other. The website includes free registration and such features as:

A Calendar of Events, Community News & Community Messages

Individual Asian based organizations and other organizations serving Asian populations can also link with ACA through the website. To do so an organization uses the "Links" menu on the website to register.

ACA also maintains broader outreach, participating as part of the statewide Ohio Asian American Health Coalition (OAAHC), a not-for-profit organization consisting of representatives of various Asian American community organizations in Ohio, health care professionals, students, and community leaders. The group focus is on some urgent Asian American health needs such as (1) hepatitis B and associated liver cancer (2) mental health, including domestic violence, and (3) prevention and control of tobacco use.

### **Over the coming year, ACA expects to focus on:**

- An Asian Health Symposium during April with topics that include hepatitis B, cardiovascular diseases, diabetes & tobacco cessation.
- A hepatitis B screening & immunization project for the members of the Asian communities especially from China, Korea, Philippines, Vietnam & Cambodia
- An education and awareness program on hepatitis B for the Asian Cultural Festival held at the Cincinnati Museum center.
- Increasing the capacity to provide services for Asian populations through additional work with a statewide coalition on two health projects.

To learn more about the organization and to get involved, please contact Asian Community Alliance at [info@acacinci.org](mailto:info@acacinci.org).

## *TO OUR ADVERTISERS*

The Hindu Society of Greater Cincinnati greatly appreciates your interest and devotion to support the Society, temple and community via Aradhana. It was simply, because of you all Aradhana-2007 was self supporting and growing. We hope your business also grew parallel with Aradhana. Let us continue our 'Symbiotic Relationship' for the New Year 2008. Please call me, Meena Mehta, at (513) 574-6763 to confirm your support and renew your advertisement for the year 2008. On the personal note it was a pleasure to work with all of you and look forward to do so again.

Thank you very much for your donation, devotion and support. If you already, have not send your contribution please do so today so I can close the Aradhana 2007Chapter and start the new chapter right away.

THANKS AGAIN

---

### *Science and Religion*

In December issue of Aradhana you read an introductory small article on the topic 'The Science of Religion', under the heading 'Science and Religion'. Under the same heading let us read a new topic in every issue of Aradhana and learn more about Hindu religion. In this January issue read the topic 'My Idea of God'.

Meena Mehta

### *MY IDEA OF GOD*

*Albert Einstein*

The most beautiful and most profound emotion we can experience is the sensation of the mystical. It is the sower of all true science.

He to whom this emotion is a stranger, who can no longer wonder and stand rapt in awe, is good as dead.

To know what is impenetrable to us really exists, manifesting itself as the highest wisdom and the most radiant beauty which our dull faculties can comprehend only in the most primitive form-this knowledge, this feeling is at the center of true religiousness.

The cosmic religious experience is the strongest and oldest mainspring of scientific research.

My religion consists of a humble admiration of the illimitable superior spirit who reveals himself in the slight details we are able to perceive with our frail and feeble minds.

That deeply emotional conviction of the presence of the superior reasoning power, which is revealed in the incomprehensible universe, forms my idea of God.

Science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind.

---

**In Hindu scriptures** which are written in Sanskrit language (Dev Bhasha) we read words like Bhagvaan, Ishvar, Brahman, Parmatma etc. Most of us generally use these words interchangeably but it is not proper at all. Anyway, when one translates these words in the English language there is only one word for these Sanskrit words which is the word GOD. This is a very loose translation because it does not carry the different deep and proper meanings of all three Sanskrit words. Let us read in detail the meaning of these words in the next issue of Aradhana and learn to use them properly.



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Like last year, 2007 was a great year. It is all due to participation of you all in all the activities and generous support to help maintain and expand the existing temple infrastructure for future expansion and development. With the expense of about \$80,000.00 the Brag Salt Road Gate project was completed. This project removes a big hurdle which we always had with the Zoning, they needed a proper entrance to our 100 acres land. Now we hope it will make an easy sailing for the approval of our long awaited "Community Center Project". With sincere efforts of the Chairperson of the project, Jitu Patel and his committee members they have succeeded in getting enough architectural drawings with the help of Mr. Bill Fiedler to be presented to the Zoning office by our attorney Mr. Trantor. A big project for Year 2008.

In end of 2007 the Executive Council and General Body have approved the Retirement Community Project which is headed by Laxmi S. Srivastava. These two projects will compliment each other.

Last one year we have been hard pressed and struggling to provide the community the services they needed due to the shortage of two Punditji's. On November 15<sup>th</sup> our new Punditji Acharya Chakreshwar Sharma and his family arrived. December 28<sup>th</sup> Shri. Bhattarji joined our temple staff. Now we hope to provide the community the services they needed and hope to satisfy everyone's request.

**Happy New Year. Your support, suggestions and generous donation will help our future dreams.**  
THANKS AGAIN.

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## Hindu Society of Greater Cincinnati

### Membership Information

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Receive 'Aradhana' Annually: \$21.00

Annual Individual Membership: \$51.00

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Patron: \$10,000.00

Membership Forms are available at the Gift Shop in the

Temple. Please also use the form to update your address. If you know someone who has moved out of town let us know. We would appreciate it.

For more information please call temple at (513) 528-3714 or Any Executive Council.

## CALENDER 2008

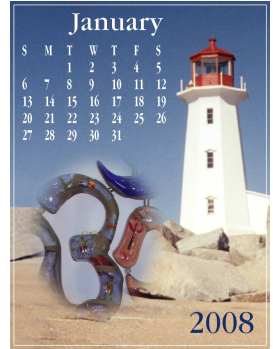
The new calendar for the year 2008 is available to you at the temple. Theme for this calendar is as unique as our temple and its unique OM.

In your next visit to the temple.

Please receive it from the Panditaji at the temple gift shop. It is complimentary for all HSGC members but feel free to donate generously to your temple. If you are yet not a member please become a member today and receive both calendar and Aradhana otherwise the suggested donation for the calendar is at least \$10.00.

Donation form as well as HSGC membership information are published in this issue of Aradhana.

C.C.C. Meena Mehta



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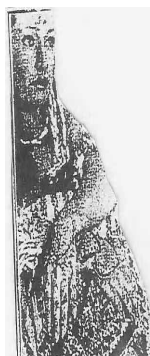
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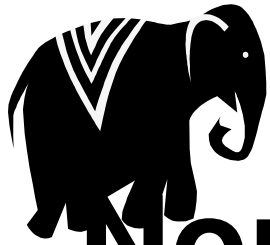
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