



PLEASE NOTE THE SCHEDULES

Monday Through Thursday: 9 am to 12 noon  
and 6 pm to 8 pm  
Friday, Weekends & Holidays: 9 am to 8 pm

# PASCHIMAVANI

DIRECTIONS

From Freeway 580 in Livermore:  
Exit North Vasco Road, left on Scenic Ave,  
Left on Arrowhead Avenue

NEWS FROM THE HINDU COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL CENTER, LIVERMORE  
VISIT OUR WEB SITE AT <http://www.livermoretemple.org>

## SHIVA-VISHNU TEMPLE

OM NAMAH SHIVAYA

TELEPHONE (925) 449-6255 FAX (925) 455-0404

OM NAMO NARAYANAYA

### UPCOMING FUNDRAISING EVENT

HCCC ( Livermore Temple ) is Sponsoring Padmashri Hariharan's Concert on Sunday, March 04, 2007 at Chabot College in association with Harmoni Ventures to Raise funds for Kitchen & Assembly Hall Expansion Projects. Please watch Temple Publicity Channels (posters, web postings and mass emails) for further details on how you can help the Temple raise funds and by being part of this Mega Concert.

### UPCOMING YOUTH & EDUCATION EVENT

#### Children's Program

On the occasion of Shiva Brahmotsavam

Theme : Shiva & Parvathi ( Matha - Pitha)

On Feb 10th 2007 - 10:30 AM to 3 PM

Events: Sloka recitation, Puja vidhi, bhajans, songs, skit , quiz , music and dance, Youth presentation will be included.

Registration: - Send email to ShivaParvathi07@Yahoo.Com prior to Feb 03 rd , 07, with the following information : Name of the Participant, Age, Event type / Duration, Requirements. Please register if you are able to attend for at least for 3 hrs and encourage others also. Preference would be given to group participants, limit time to 5-10 mins per program. Programs should be on Hindu mythology and values- should be classical or folk based.

### RELIGIOUS COOK WANTED

HCCC Livermore Temple is currently looking for Religious Hindu Cooks to hire as a part time and full time employers. People who are qualified and interested can contact Dharwar Achar at 925 525 0914 or Prasuna Reddy at 925 698 0501.

### ANNADAANA PROGRAM

Dear Devotees:

In this whole universe, the creation depends on food and it is progressing because of the food. Giving food to the devotees is more than attaining heavens. All our puranas hail that the Annadaana is the supreme and is incomparable to any other form of charity.

Livermore Temple has been providing Lunch Prasada (Annadaana Program) for all devotees visiting the temple on any weekend day for the last five years. This program is completely sponsored by the Livermore temple devotees. Every weekend day, there will be an average of four devotees' families sponsor the Annadaana Program.

Devotees sponsor on weekend days that are special to them such as, birthdays, marriage days or death anniversary days of their dear ones. Devotees also sponsor on special occasions like graduation, promotions, starting a new business, New Year day, other temple festival days, etc.

Also, the best part of Anna Daana program is when you become part of cooking the food for devotees. If you are available,

—Cont. on page 7

### PLEASE NOTE

If you would like to receive a copy of this newsletter free of charge to your home address in USA, please ask for a card at the main office, fill it up and return. All the past issues of this newsletter are available at the Temple Website in PDF format.

If you would like to be informed of all Temple Events, you can receive a weekly email with links to Temple web pages. To subscribe to this, visit the Temple website [www.LivermoreTemple.org](http://www.LivermoreTemple.org) and enter your email address in the box provided at the left hand side of the page and click on "Join Mailing List" button that is right below the box.

If you are already a registered devotee, please make sure that you have given an active email address in your registration to receive this weekly email. You may be already receiving this email in your spam/junk mail box. To get this email in your "inbox", please follow the instructions given in the web page "Add us to your address book" linked below the box mentioned in the previous paragraph.

If you would like to contribute an article to this news letter, please contact Publicity Chair at [SridarKP@Gmail.com](mailto:SridarKP@Gmail.com)

- Sridar K Poothari, Publicity Chair.



## PLANNED SPECIAL EVENTS

DATE/DAY	EVENTS	TIME	ACTIVITIES
Jan 1st Mon	New Years Day	Temple opens from 7:00AM to 8:30PM	
	Rohini	6:30 PM	Sri Krishna Pooja
Jan 2nd Tue	Poornima	6:30 PM	Sri Lalitha Sahasranama Parayana
Jan 3rd Wed	Arudra Darshanam	9:30 PM	Shiva Abhishekam
Jan 4th Thur	Punarvasu	6:30 PM	Sri Rama Abhishekam
Jan 6th Sat	1st Sat of the Month	11:00 AM	Swarna Alamkaram for Shiva
		12 Noon	Vastra Samarpanam for Balaji
	Samkathara Chaturthi	6:30 PM	Sri Ganesha Abhishekam
Jan 12th Fri	Swati	6:30 PM	Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Abhishekam
Jan 13th Sat	2nd Sat of the Month	10:00 AM	Balaji Sahasra Kalasha Abhishekam
		10:00 AM	Muttangi Alamkaram for Shiva
	Dhanur Masa Puja	3:00 PM	Andal Kalyanam
Jan 14th Sun	Makara Sankaranthi, Thai Pongal		
	Ayyappa Makara Deepa	6:30 PM	Ayyappa Pooja
	Ekadasi	6:30 PM	Balaji Bhoga Murthy Abhishekam
Jan 15th Mon	MLK Day	Temple opens from 9:00 AM to 8:00 PM	
Jan 16th Tue	Pradosham	6:30 PM	Shiva Abhishekam
Jan 17th Wed	Masa Shivaratri	6:30 PM	108 Kalasha Abhishekam for Shiva
Jan 19th Fri	Sravana	6:30 PM	Balaji Sahasranama Archana
Jan 20th Sat	3rd Sat of the Month	11:00 AM	Tiruppavadaï seva for Balaji
		11:00 AM	Rajatha Seva for Shiva
Jan 21st Sun	3rd Sunday of the Month	11:00 AM	Bilva Dala Archana for Shiva
Jan 23rd Tue	Vasanth panchami	Saraswathi Pooja Details on page 2	
	Vasanth panchami	7:00 PM	Sri Lalitha S.A.* by Sumangalis
	Sashti	6:30 PM	Kartikeya Sahasranama Archana
Jan 24th Wed	Ratha Saptami	10:00 AM	Surya Namaskaram
Jan 27th Sat	4th Sat of the Month	12 Noon	Pushpa Seva for Balaji
	Krittika	6:30 PM	Kartikeya Abhishekam and Archana
Jan 28th Sun	Ratha Saptami (Weekend Func)	10:00 AM	Surya Namaskaram
	Bheeshma Ekadasi	6:30 PM	Balaji Bhoga Murthy Abhishekam
	Rohini	6:30 PM	Sri Krishna Pooja
	Last Sunday of the Month	4:30 PM	Sri Kala Bhairava Abhishekam
Jan 30th Tue	Pradosham	6:30 PM	Shiva Abhishekam
Jan 31st Wed	Punarvasu	6:30 PM	Sri Rama Abhishekam
Feb 1st Thur	Thai Poosam	6:30 PM	Kartikeya Abhishekam and Archana
	Poornima	6:30 PM	Sri Lalitha Sahasranama Parayana
Feb 3rd Sat	1st Sat of the Month	11:00 AM	Swarna Alamkaram for Shiva
		12 Noon	Vastra Samarpana for Balaji
Feb 5th Mon	Samkathara Chaturthi	6:30 PM	Sri Ganesha Abhishekam
Feb 9th Fri	Shiva Brahmotsavam Day 1	Details on page 2	
	Swati	6:30 PM	Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Abhishekam
Feb 10th Sat	2nd Sat of the Month	10:00 AM	Balaji Sahasra Kalasha Abhishekam
	Shiva Brahmotsavam Day 2	Muttangi Alamkaram for Shiva	
Feb 11th Sun	Shiva Brahmotsavam Day 3		
Feb 13th Tue	Ekadasi	6:30 PM	Balaji Bhoga Murthy Abhishekam
Feb 14th Wed	Pradosham	6:30 PM	Shiva Abhishekam
Feb 15th Thur	Maha Shivaratri	Details on page 2	
Feb 16th Fri	Sravana	6:30 PM	Balaji Sahasranama Archana
Feb 17th Sat	3rd Sat of the Month	11:00 AM	Tiruppavadaï seva for Balaji
		11:00 AM	Rajatha Seva for Shiva
Feb 18th Sun	3rd Sun of the Month	11:00 AM	Bilva Dala Archana for Shiva
Feb 19th Mon	President's Day	Temple Opens from 9:00 AM to 8:00 PM	
Feb 22nd Thur	Sashti	6:30 PM	Karthikeya Sahasranama Archana
Feb 23rd Fri	Krittika	6:30 PM	Karthikeya Abhishekam and Archana
Feb 24th Sat	4th Sat of the Month	12 Noon	Pushpa Seva for Balaji
	Rohini	6:30 PM	Sri Krishna Pooja
Feb 25th Sun	Last Sunday of the Month	4:30 PM	Sri Kala Bhairava Abhishekam
Feb 27th Tue	Ekadasi	6:30 PM	Balaji Bhoga Murthy Abhishekam
	Punarvasu	6:30 PM	Sri Rama Abhishekam
Feb 28th Wed	Pradosham	6:30 PM	Shiva Abhishekam

VASANTA PANCHAMI		
DATE/DAY	TIME	EVENTS
Jan 23 Tue	9:30 AM	Puja and Pushpanjali in Dasa Bhuja Durga sanctum
	10:30 AM	Saraswathi puja & Pushpanjali
	11:30 AM	Aksharabhyaasa for Children (Hate Kari)
	12:00 Noon	Bhog Prasad
SHIVA BRAHMOTSAVAM (Feb 9 - Feb11)		
Feb 9 Fri	7:00 PM	Anujna, Ganapati Pooja, Punyahavachana, Deeksha Panchagavya, Amkurarpanam, Nandhi Abhishekam, Vastu Homa, Dhwaaja Pataka Pooja, Dhwaaja Arohana, Bali, Arati, Prasadam
Feb 10 Sat	9:00 AM	Shiva and Vishnu Suprabatham
	9:30 AM	Shiva Abhishekam
	10:30 AM	Nava Kumbha Sthapana
	11:30 AM	Agni Pratishta, Nitya Homa and Bali
	12:30 PM	Arathi
	5:00 PM	Rudra Homa, Sadyojatadi Homa, Parivara Devata Homa, Laghu Poornahuti
	7:30 PM	Nitya Aradhana, Bali, Arati and Mantra Pushpam
Feb 11 Sun	8:00 AM	Shiva and Vishnu Suprabatham
	8:30 AM	Shiva, Ganapathi & Kartikeya Abhishekam
	10:30 AM	Nithya Homa, Bali
	11:30 AM	Parvati Parameshwara Utsava Murthy Abhishekam
	1:00 PM	Avabrutha Snanam, Maha Poornahuti, and Arathi
	3:30 PM	Shiva-Parvathi Kalyanam
	5:00 PM	Nandhi Vahana Seva for Lord Shiva
	7:00 PM	Mouna Bali, Dwaja Avarohanam, Deeksha Visarjanam, Asheervachanam
MAHA SHIVARATRI		
Feb 15 Thu	6:00 AM	Shiva and Vishnu Suprabatham
	6:30 AM	1st Yaama - Shiva Abhishekam
	10:00 AM	2nd Yaama - Shiva Abhishekam
	1:00 PM	3rd Yaama - Shiva Abhishekam
	3:30 PM	4th Yaama - Shiva Abhishekam
	5:00 PM	Lingaakruti Deepa Pooja
	6:00 PM	5th Yaama - Mahanyasa Parayanam, Rudra Abhishekam and Astavadana Seva
	12:30 AM	6th Yaama - Shiva Abhishekam
	3:30 AM	7th Yaama - Shiva Abhishekam
	5:30 AM	8th Yaama - Shiva Abhishekam

## PLANNED SPECIAL EVENTS

DATE/DAY	EVENTS	TIME	ACTIVITIES
Mar 2nd Fri	Poornima	6:30 PM	Sri Lalitha Sahasranama Parayana
Mar 3rd Sat	1st Sat of the Month	11:00 AM 12 Noon	Swarna Alamkaram for Shiva Vastra Samarpana for Balaji
Mar 7th Wed	Partial Lunar Eclipse Sankatahara Chaturthi	6:30 PM	Partially Visible ( 17:11 to 18:23 ) Ganesha Abhishekam
Mar 8th Thur	Swati	6:30 PM	Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Abhishekam
Mar 10th Fri	2nd Sat of month	10:00 AM 10:00 AM	Balaji Sahasra Kalasha Abhishekam Muttangi Alamkaram for Shiva
Mar 11th Sun	Day Light Saving Time Begins		
Mar 14th Wed	Karadaiyar Nombu Ekadasi	6:30 PM	Mahalakshmi Archana Balaji Bhoga Murthy Abhishekam
Mar 15th Thur	Sravana	6:30 PM	Balaji Sahasranama Archana
Mar 16th Fri	Pradosham	6:30 PM	Shiva Abhishekam
Mar 17th Sat	3rd Sat of the Month	11:00 AM 11:00 AM	Tiruppavada Seva for Balaji Rajatha Seva for Shiva
Mar 18th Sun	Masa Shivaratri 3rd Sunday of the Month Solar eclipse	6:30 PM 11:00 AM	108 Kalasha Abhishekam for Shiva Bilva Dala Archana for Shiva
Mar 19th Mon	Ugadi , Asthanam	6:30 PM	Panchanga Sravanam in Telugu, Kannada and English
Mar 22nd Thur	Vasantha Navaratra Starts Krittika	6:30 PM	Kartikeya Abhishekam and Archana
Mar 23rd Fri	Rohini	6:30 PM	Sri Krishna Pooja
Mar 24th Sat	4th Sat of the Month	12 Noon	Pushpa Seva for Balaji
Mar 25th Sun	Last Sunday of the Month	4:30 PM	Sri Kala Bhairava Abhishekam
Mar 26th Mon	Sri Rama Navami		Details on Page 3
Mar 28th Wed	Ekadasi	6:30 PM	Balaji Bhoga Murthy Abhishekam
Mar 30th Fri	Pradosham	6:30 PM	Shiva Abhishekam
Apr 1st Sun	Sri Rama Navami Weekend Function Panguni Utthiram		Details on Page 3 Details on Page 3

## Sri Rama Navami Celebrations

DATE/DAY	TIME	EVENTS
Mar 19-26	8:00 AM	Srimad Ramayanana Parayanama
	6:30 PM	Sri Rama Sahasranama Archana
Mar 26 Mon	10:00 AM 11:00 AM	Sri Rama Abhishekam Sri Rama Shadakshari Homa and Namakarana Samskara Homa
	12:00 Noon 6:30 PM	Theertha prasadam Sri Seeta Rama Kalyanotsavam
Apr 1 Sun	8:00 AM	Shiva and Balaji Suprabatham
Weekend Funct	8:30 AM	Abhishekam for Shiva, Ganesha, Karthikeya & Hanuman
	9:30 AM	Seeta Rama Edurukola Utsavam
	11:00 AM	Sri Seeta Rama Kalyanam
	12:00 Noon	Sumuhurtham
	12:30 PM	Akshataropanam, Asheervachanam & Theertha Prasadam
	1:30 PM	Sri Seeta Rama Sankeertanam
	3:00 PM	Sri Rama PattAbhishekam
	6:00 PM	Hanumanta Vahana Utsavam with Rama Sankeerthana Chakka Bhajana
	7:00 PM	Maha Mangala Arati
	7:15 PM	Kalyana Bhojanam in A.Hall
	8:00 PM	Ekanta Seva for Balaji
<b>PANGUNI UTTHIRAM</b>		
Apr 1 Sun	5:00 PM 6:00 PM	Maha Lakshmi Asthanam Gadya traya Parayanam Maha Lakshmi Utsavam
	7:00 PM	Sethi Seva



## HEALTH FAIR REPORT TO THE HCCC STEERING COMMITTEE; Nov.19,2006

Good afternoon Mr. Chairman, President and members of the Steering Committee.

As the Chair Person of the Human Services Committee it is my privilege to present this report to you.

I hope most of you had a chance to read the October 20th edition of India West, article written by Smt. Ketaki Gokhale. In her comprehensive and Complimentary article about Hindu Temples trying to provide basic health screening, she mentions about our Shiva-Vishnu Temple and its weekly free medical clinic on premises. Her report was timely and very good.

Further IW published my letter to the editor regarding our Health Fair, in this week's edition.

### Health Fair, 2006

This year our Health Fair was on Saturday, November 11th. AAPIO also had Health Fair same day and same time in Fremont, but it did not conflict with our services. We had over 22 medical doctors, dentists and technicians volunteering their services. Medical doctors included specialists in Cardiology, internal medicine, pediatrics, ophthalmology, Psychiatry, Dermatology, nutrition, nursing and other technicians. We also tested Blood Sugar, Blood Pressure, Cholesterol and Bone density.

The Health Fair was very well attended, 310 people were screened.

A local doctor, who saw the flyer in the Livermore library, called us and volunteered his services. Dr. Gerardo Contreras is a Chiropractor. He and his assistant were very impressed: they want to come back next year.

This year several Livermore residents (non Indians) made use of this service. They were very thankful for this opportunity. The Health Fair is helping us build another bridge to the greater community. This I am sure you all agree is a good thing.



Pictures from the Children's Day Celebrations on Nov. 18th.



Health Fair Volunteers

## HCCC CHAIRPERSON'S COLUMN

Dear Devotees:

Hindu Community and Cultural Center ( Shiva Vishnu temple ) is in the process of conducting 2007 elections, to replace the out going Board of Directors ( BoD ) and the members from the Executive Committee ( EC ). This democratic tradition and practice is being followed by the HCCC since the first Kumbhabhishekam, and we all are proud of the smooth transition of the elected officers from one year to the next. The HCCC Steering Committee ( SC ) based upon the recommendation from the BoD has appointed Sri. Vishu Visweswaran as the 2007 Election Commission Chairman. We wish the Election Commission a successful completion of the election process, the results of which will be announced in February 2007.

The year 2007 is well upon us, and the New Year's Day preparations are well underway. HCCC is expecting more than 6000 devotees visiting the temple on the New Year's Day and long queues are to be anticipated too. Please come early, allocate enough time, follow the signs posted, honor the instructions given by the volunteers so that every one can have darshan of the deities and have a wonderful start for the year 2007. May I take this opportunity to wish each and every one of you A Happy Prosperous Year 2007.

Pdt. Kapre, a smartha priest from Hyderabad will be joining our temple before the end of December 2006. Sri Kapre is a Vedic GHANAPATI and is very well versed in the Shiva Agama. Our search for a highly qualified Vaikhanasa agama priest is still continuing. We are hopeful that soon we will find a well-versed Vaikhanasa priest that will be best suited in continuing the Vaikhanasa tradition established at our temple under Sri. Srinivasacharlu.

A number of "Youth and Education" programs were successfully conducted during the past three months at our temple. Saraswati pooja, aksharabhyasa, children's day etc. were well attended and both children and their parents have complimented HCCC for organizing such functions. Please bring your children, participate actively, let your children socialize with other children and learn more about Hindu religion.

In keeping with the devotees requests, starting from January 2007, HCCC will offer different pooja services (yearly basis) that the devotees will be able to sponsor. We are instituting a yearly "nitya ashtottara archana" for one or more deities of your choice. The sponsorship donation will be \$ 1001- for one deity per year. Priests will be doing sankalpam every day for the devotee and family at the time of the first daily archana to the deity (devotee's preference). Many more services like the above are being contemplated and will be announced in January 2007. I request the devotees to donate towards these sponsored offerings.

HCCC, as a non-profit organization, depends upon devotee donations for it's future developments and sustenance. We are planning to have a fund raising event.. a musical concert.. by the well-known classical singer and cine artist Sri. Hariharan on March 4th, 2007. Details about venue for this concert, tickets etc. will be announced on the HCCC web site soon. Please mark your calendar and attend this fund raising event.

Om Namah Shivaya and Om Namo Venkatesaya.

Jagannadham Akella, Chair Person, HCCC Livermore



Pictures from Health Fair

## VALMIKI, KAMBAN, AND TULASIDAS

By T. N. Narasimhan

Over millenniums, the story of Rama has permeated all aspects of Hindu life; religion, morality, music, art, literature, and codes of day-to-day living. Throughout history, sages, saints, bards, and just common people have reveled in retelling Rama's story as suiting their fancy, never flagging in spirit. Among these countless works of devotion and love, those of Valmiki (Sanskrit), Kamban (Tamil), and Tulasidas (Hindi), occupy positions of eminence.

Sage Valmiki is believed to have composed Ramayana (Rama's Coming) around 500 B.C. This mahakavyam (great poem) comprises some 24,000 slokas (about 50,000 lines), organized into seven cantos: Bala, Ayodhya, Aranya, Kishkinda, Sundara, Yuddha, and Uttara kandas. Although some doubts exist if the first and the last cantos were actually written by the Sage himself, they are generally accepted as integral parts of the epic. In reciting the story of Rama, Valmiki simultaneously recognizes the divinity of Rama as an incarnation (avatara) of Vishnu, as well as the humanness of Rama. Indeed, Valmiki has Rama say, "—tm,nam m,nusham manye" (Consider me human). Thus, Rama is portrayed as a remarkable human being, committed to abiding by the highest ideals of dharma (righteousness) then extant. Throughout the Ramayana, Rama's commitment to dharma is put to severe tests. Although Rama prevails over his trials and tribulations, there are occasions when he gives in to human failings of anger, suspicion, and even deceit. The lessons of Rama's life, as portrayed by Sage Valmiki, are as valid for those who do not believe in his divinity as to those who accept Rama as a personification of Vishnu.

Over fifteen centuries later, Kavichakravarti Kamban retold Valmiki's story of Rama in Iramavataram (Rama's Incarnation). Kamban, "Emperor" among poets, lived in the Cauveri delta during late 12th to early 13th century. He probably belonged to a priestly caste attached to temples of Kali. Kamban was likely much influenced by the Vaishnavite saints (Azhvars) of 6th to 9th centuries, for whom selfless devotion to Rama and Krishna constituted a path to salvation from the cycle of birth and death. In this atmosphere, Kamban chose to portray Rama as an ideal being, devoid of blemishes, transcending human errors. Rather than translating Valmiki, he told the story in his own way, discarding the blemishes of Valmiki's human Rama. Kamban used his prodigious skills as a poet to frame Rama's story within the geography, culture, mores, and values of the Tamil country of his own times. Iramavataram is close to 50,000 lines long, comprising over 11,600 stanzas, and organized into the same number of cantos as Valmiki's Ramayana.

The human Rama of Valmiki, who is presented as God's personification by Kamban, is verily the Lord Himself in Ramcharitmanas of Saint Tulasidas (1532-1623), a smartha Vaishnava brahmin who lived in Uttar Pradesh during the reign of Emperor Akbar. Abandoned by his parents as a child, Tulasidas was raised by a sadhu, Narahari, a spiritual descendant of Ramananda who was a disciple of Ramanuja, the founder of visishtadvaita philosophy in Tamil Nadu during the 11th century. Tulasidas, who had lived in Ayodhya, Chitrakut and other places hallowed in the Ramayana lore, started writing his masterpiece in 1574 in Ayodhya, and completed it two and a half years later in Kashi. Although he started writing the epic in Sanskrit, he is said to have been commanded by Lord Shiva in a dream to tell Rama's story in Hindi. Written in Awadhi (Baiswari) dialect, Ramcharitmanas is considered one of the greatest works of Hindi literature. As for the title of his work, the poet says that Lord Shiva composed and preserved Rama's story in his mind, and rejoicing in it, He Himself gave it the name, Ramcharitmanas.

Like Kamban before him, Tulasidas chose to retell Valmiki's story in his own way, while conforming to Valmiki's Ramayana in general outline. Of the seven cantos in the Tulasi-krita Ramayana, the first two, devoted to Childhood and Ayodhya, make up more than half the work. Comprising some 2,500 chhands and slokas, this work is about 13,000 lines long, and thus is shorter than those of Valmiki and Kamban.

In its essence, Tulasidas' Ramayana is a work of bhakti (pure devotion), reciting the glory of God's own deeds on the earth. Remarkably, the choice of Hindi in preference to literary Sanskrit brought Tulasidas' Ramayana within the grasp of the lay person, who could recite it, enjoy it, and savor its beauty. What more, it gave the lay person the hope of salvation through a devoted study of Rama's deeds and reciting Rama's name, rather than being lost in the abstract metaphysics of Vedanta. In this sense, Ramcharitmanas occupies a position similar to that of the Divyaprabandams (of the Azhvar saints), which are considered as Tamil scriptures.

The Ramayanas of Valmiki, Kamban and Tulasidas undoubtedly have their place among the greatest epics of world literature. Two epics that come to mind here are Homer's Iliad and Odyssey, composed around 700 B.C. in Greece. The former concerns the events during the last year in the siege of Troy, while the latter concerns the events befalling the hero, Odysseus, during his long journey back home, Ithaca, after the fall of Troy. Unlike the Ramayana, which relates to its hero's entire life, the Greek epics restrict themselves to a set of events over a limited period of time. At approximately 16,000 lines and 12,000 lines respectively, Iliad and Odyssey are much shorter than the works of Valmiki and Kamban. Like Valmiki's Ramayana, Homer's works went through a period of oral tradition before being transcribed into written words.

Saint Thyagaraja (1767-1848), an ardent devotee of Rama, was moved by the qualities of saintly people whom he had come across, and uttered in an exquisite Telugu composition, "Endaro mahanubavulu, andariki vandanamu". Inspired by Thyagaraja, we express our admiration of Valmiki, Kamban, and Tulasidas by saying, "How blessed are these noble souls! To them all, obeisance".

## PREPARATION OF HCCC CALENDAR

By K.Venkateswaran

The HCCC calendar is specially prepared for North America based on San Francisco timings (PST/PDT). In July, our temple will be 21 years old and has served many thousands of Hindus from all over the world and of different Sampradaya. Even though all Hindus follow the ancient Vedic and Agamic principles, there are many differences in the way the festivals are celebrated and sometimes in the underlying reasons for the celebrations.

A Questions that is constantly asked: how the Institution can adhere to strict Hindu Vedic traditions and yet provide enough flexibility in worship and celebrations that reflect the local influence? The yearly Calendar that HCCC releases is inclusive to all and yet true to the definition of Hindu interpretation of Panchang and the underlying principles. Since 1995 HCCC decided to follow the Panchang based on San Francisco timings. Due to this there are and will be differences between the dates for festivals in HCCC calendar/panchang versus the Panchang prepared per Indian Standard Time (IST). There are excellent articles that are available online which I can provide if interested. In this article we want to give brief explanation to this approach and why in some instances the functions and festivals are celebrated in India one day earlier.

Panchang means Pancha Anga or five attributes to a day; they are Vara (Day), Tithi (Lunar Day), Nakshatra (Star), Yogam (Luni Solar Day) and Karana (Semi Lunar Day). Month is either Lunar month or Solar (Soura) month. The Hindu Panchang is based on the relative positions of the Sun, Earth and Moon in the backdrop of Galaxies. The relative positions of Earth, Sun and Moon are astronomical events so they occur at the same time all over the world. This is exactly the same time in India as in San Francisco and it has no reference to day or night. Once the Panchang for a particular day is known, the date for festivals and functions are determined based on the conditions necessary for the particular festival/function. To determine a festival or event we should know 1) the panchang attributes of a given day and 2) the conditions that are necessary for a function. One of the main determining factors is the time when the event occurs with respect to start of day at sunrise and sunset. In the Western calendar, the day begins past midnight, whereas in the Indian Panchang, the day begins at sunrise. To reiterate, the Hindu day starts at Sun rise not mid night. The conditions necessary for a particular function is what sometime makes celebration days in India different than in the San Francisco Bay area. In fact there are some instances where there will be differences between the East and West coast of USA, as the sun rises in the east coast 3 hours before west coast.

To avoid confusion, in HCCC calendar the timings are given in a 30 hour format; the day starts at 6:00 AM and continues through 6:00 AM the next day i.e. till 30 hours (24 + 6). Thus, 2:00 AM is shown as 26:00 in the calendar. The dates for temple festivals, special pujas and events are set as per Dharma Pravriti and are based on Thithi, Nakshatra, lunar or solar months. Dates for some functions are set based on Thithi or Nakshatra at sunrise, while for certain other functions, the prevailing Nakshatra or Thithi at the time of the function is important. For certain other functions, the exact time at which the solar month (Rasi) changes is important. For birth and travel, the Thithi and Nakshatra at the exact time of birth/travel is important

Here are a two examples to illustrate this point. A simple example is an eclipse; the time when the Moon covers the Sun completely is same regardless where you are, not 12 hours after India. One may not be able to witness it depending on the location but the eclipse is still occurring at that time, even if you cannot see it. Another example is the start of a Solar Month, a new Solar month begins when Sun Rasi (Zodiac sign) changes. The Rasi changing time is an astronomical event and occurs at the same in India as in USA, but what could be different is Day 1 of the "new month". If the "Rasi" changing time is before sunset then "Day 1" is the day when the change occurs, if it is after sunset then "Day 1" is the next day. As an example, in 207 Sun enters Meena Rasi (Pisces) on March 14, 2007 at 14:30, being an astronomical event the change occurs before sunset in San Francisco but is early morning of March 15 in India, so Phanguni 1 is March 14 in the Bay area and March 15 in India.

The HCCC Calendar is prepared based on San Francisco Latitude and Longitude and Sunrise and Sunset and by considering the "necessary conditions" for the festival and event determinations. Few other temples in North America also follow this determination for their annual Calendar. HCCC calendar entries are set by Hereditary Panchang experts in India and reviews and cross-checks are done by HCCC Priests and Devotee volunteers. Spot checks are made with other publications and on line sites for Panchang attributes and US Naval Observatory site for Sun/Moon Phases, Sunrise-Sunset and eclipses. Extra scrutiny is given whenever it is determined that the celebration days are expected to be different than India.

...Contd. from page 1

please give a hand and participate in Srama Daana, which is actually performing the cooking and serving food for devotees. Most of the weekends, one to three families will come to the temple and prepare food for devotees.

For example, on Jan 1st of 2007, 50+ Annadaana sponsors took care of 15,000+ devotees visiting on that weekend. Sponsors donated money, food items and also come as volunteers to prepare food and server for all the devotees visiting the temple.

A suggested donation of just \$251 to the Temple will provide food for about 600+ people on a weekend day. If you want to become a one of the co-sponsors for this unique program, Please contact Latha Ravi (925 819 0830), Dharwar Achar ( dharwar2000@yahoo.com, 925 525 0914), Prasuna Reddy (prasunad@yahoo.com, 925 698 0501) or Temple Office (925 525 0914). See also :

<http://www.livermoretemple.org/hints/manage/content/asp/Annadana.htm>

Prasuna Reddy, Food Chair



...Contd. from page 3

**Volunteers:** Volunteers are the back bone of our Temple. We had 40 volunteers ages from 14 through 60 years. Some of the younger ones have become pros. It is such a pleasure to see the next generation doing a wonderful job with passion and compassion

**Special Mentions:** My special Thanks to Mrs. Lakshmi Dharwar, who meticulously coordinated all the doctors for the Health Fair in addition to her work with the free clinic.

- Dr. India Reddy who donated her time, her expertise and also donated \$2000.00 worth of medical supplies.
- Dr. Lakshmi Palagummi donated time and medical supplies. She oriented some of the volunteers with latest use of medical equipment.
- Some of our young volunteers, I think, are future doctors in the making!
- Mr. Sridhar Potheri was very helpful in creating posters, flyers and certificates

**Publicity:** This time I took an unconventional approach to publicity. Instead going through news paper and magazines, I made a trip to ICC, Jain Bhavan, Swami Narayan Temple, Chimaya Mission and Gurudwar. All these institutions have a weekly senior get together, once a month senior nights. I had an opportunity to talk to the officers of these organizations and they were very helpful in advertising our Health Fair by posting and distributing our flyers.

**Feedback:** We requested evaluations & we received back One Hundred. All the comments were very positive and very complimentary.

**Sample comments:**

- The Health Fair was organized very well
- Most of them were able to talk to 4 or 5 doctors.
- Volunteers were very helpful and very friendly.
- Recommendation is, we should have Health Fair at least 2 or 3 times a year
- All the lines moved swiftly

The volunteers liked the certificates we gave them! & made sure they would not leave the Health Fair without one!

**Other Activities of Human Services:** Donated \$1000.00 check towards L.C.T.D. Livermore Community Thanksgiving Dinner. 15 HCCC volunteers will be helping serve Thanksgiving Dinner. Donated \$500.00 to Tri- Valley Haven Food Pantry.

**Future Activities Planned:** Christmas 2006 donation: HS group has decided this donation will go to VA Hospital this year.

I need to contact Harvest Bank regarding their Canned Food Drive.

- Grants in Aid will be announced soon.
- Bone Marrow Drive is on the table.

We are considering setting up two High School Scholarship subject to the EC & board approval

HCCC can be proud of its Human Services Activities - Thanks to our long established policy and the dedicated volunteers.

In Closing..... May I ask all of you to congratulate each other in a special way?

Let each one of us shake the hand of the person sitting next or gently pat the back of the person in front and feel good about HCCC and its Human Services activities.

Thank you, Katyayini Satya (Chair-Human Services), November 19, 2006



## SHIVA-VISHNU TEMPLE

HINDU COMMUNITY &  
CULTURAL CENTER

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