

# HARI TIMES



**Priest:**  
**R.C. Yagnik**

**SITA-RAMA \* RADHE-SHYAM**

**February 2001**

## **Executive Committee:**

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Mr. Pravin Patel 766-6256

### Sr. Vice President:

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### Secretary/Treasurer:

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### School-Lunch Coordinator:

Mrs. Prabha Kulkarni 732-8217

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### Board of Trustees:

#### **Chairman:**

Mr. Jitu Parekh 766-9565

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Mr. Dasa Gangadhar 763-8545

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Mr. Virendra Mehta 249-3120

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### Website Coordinator:

Mr. Dasa Gangadhar 763-8545



## **VASANT PANCHAMI SARASWATI POOJA**

Sunday  
February 11, 2001  
10:00 AM

Followed by Lunch  
Served at Noon by  
Bengali Families



## ***Maha Shivratri***

Saturday  
February 24, 2001

**Bhajan by  
Mrs. Usha Bhargave**

**Dinner sponsored  
by  
Mrs. & Mr.  
Satish Upadhyay  
(5:30 to 7:00 PM)**

## **HARI TIMES**

HARI Times is the monthly newsletter of Hindu American Religious Institute. The newsletter will be posted on the temple website beginning February 1, 2001.



## The Meaning of OM

By Megha Patel

In Hinduism and other religions of India, 'Om' is a sacred syllable that is considered to be the greatest of all the mantras, or sacred formulas. The syllable Om is composed of the three sounds a-u-m (in Sanskrit, the vowels a and u combine to become o), which represent several important triads: the three worlds of earth, atmosphere, and heaven; the three major Hindu Gods; Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva.([www.123india.com](http://www.123india.com)) Thus, Om mystically embodies the essence of the entire universe. It is uttered at the beginning and end of Hindu prayers, chants, and meditation. From the 6<sup>th</sup> century, the written symbol designation the sound is used to mark the beginning of a text in a manuscript of an inscription.

The syllable is discussed in a number of the Upanishads, which are the texts of philosophical speculation, and it forms the entire subject matter of one, the Mandukya. It is used in the practice of Yoga and is related to techniques of auditory meditation. "In the Puranas the syllable is put to sectarian use; hence the Saiva mark the lingam, or sign of Shiva, with the symbol for Om, whereas the Vaishnava identify the three sounds as referring to a trinity composed of Vishnu, his wife Laxmi, and the worshiper." ([www.hindu.org](http://www.hindu.org))

### Special Thanks to:

- ॐ Mrs. Aruna Lal for performing the New Year Day Havan
- ॐ Mrs Geeta Kumar for coordinating the Pongal/Makar Sankranti dinner
- ॐ To all who paid their membership dues for 2001.  
( Please remember send your check if you have not done so yet )

### Oops:

- ॐ Mr. Bharat Patel's name was inadvertently omitted in last month's newsletter. He is currently serving as a Vice President.
- ॐ Mr. Champak Shah's name was inadvertently omitted in last month's newsletter. He is currently serving as a member of Trustee

**Maha Shivratri** is 'the great night of Shiva', celebrated on the moonless night of the month of Phalguna, which is fourteenth day in the dark half, this festival is specially dedicated to Shiva, the Destroyer.

Devotees of Shiva fast on this day and maintain a long vigil during the night. From the very early morning, Shiva temples are flocked by devotees, mostly women, who come to perform the traditional worship and hence hope for favors from the God. An unmarried woman prays for a husband like Shiva, who is considered to be the ideal husband.

On this day, the linga is bathed with five sacred offerings produced from cow, called *panchagavya* -milk, sour milk, butter, water and cow dung. Thereafter five foods of immortality – milk, clarified butter, curd, honey, and sugar are offered. Dhatura and Jati, though poisonous are believed to be sacred to Shiva and offered to him. Shiva is believed to be very hot tempered, and hence things, which have a cooling effect, are offered to him.

**Vasant Panchami** is celebrated on the fifth day of the bright fortnight in the month of Magha. It is a festival dedicated to Goddess Saraswati – The Goddess of Learning. Hindus all over the world celebrate this festival with great enthusiasm.

Vasant Panchami marks the beginning of the spring season. It is hence celebrated with gaiety and festivity to mark the end of the winter. The festive color yellow, symbolic of spring, plays an important part of this day. Saraswati is dressed in yellow garments. People wear yellow clothes, offer yellow flowers in worship and put a yellow, turmeric tilak on their forehead.

The object of Saraswati worship is to achieve distinction in all academic disciplines, science and literature. Students place their books before the image of the goddess. On this day, the family priest puts chalk in the hand of the youngest child and guides the child's hand in writing the alphabet: a rite symbolizing an initiation into the realm of knowledge. In fact some parents wait for this auspicious day for their child to begin his education. Many children are made to write their first letter after being blessed by the goddess on this day.

## **DONATIONS FOR EARTH QUAKE RELIEF EFFORT IN GUJARAT, INDIA**

The massive 7.9 magnitude earthquake that hit Gujarat state in India on January 26, 2001 has caused death and destruction of unimaginable proportions. The death toll may go as high as 100,000 people. At this critical time, it is incumbent upon all caring people to generously donate towards the relief effort for the earthquake victims. Three local organizations of Central Pennsylvania, namely, Hindu American Religious Institute (HARI), Asian Indian Association of Central Pennsylvania (AIACPA) and Gujarati Samaj of Greater Harrisburg have joined forces to raise donations for this worthy cause. A Fund Raising Committee consisting of the following members has been established and any one of the following members can be contacted for information about this effort at the telephone numbers listed below:

Pravin Patel	(717-766-6256)	Jitendra Parekh	(717-766-9565)	Shashikant Patel	(717-795-1141)
Unmesh Pandya	(717-652-4670)	Mukund Kulkarni	(717-732-8127)	Naran Patel	(717-540-0352)
J.P.Sheth	(717-299-5700)	Sardari Khanna	(717-741-0757)	M.U.Farooq	(717-737-8057)
Mukul Parikh	(717-728-9801)	Deep Gupta	(717-732-5971)	Mrs. Bhanu Patel	(717-737-7781)
Dasa Gangadhar	(717-763-8545)	Yogesh Parikh	(717-763-0377)		

Tax-deductible donation checks can be mailed to one the following addresses:

Hindu American Religious Institute (HARI)  
301 Steigerwalt Hollow Road  
New Cumberland, PA 17070

AIACPA  
5602 Pinehurstway  
Mechanicsburg, PA 17050

- ॐ To Sponsor an activity, an artist or lunch/dinner, Please contact Mr. Parimal Parikh at 766-3247
- ॐ HARI Devotees may rent the Temple for private functions. Please contact Mrs. Rashmica Shah at 637-1067 for reservation.
- ॐ To receive newsletter via email, contact HARI website Coordinator, Mr. Dasa V. Gangadhar at [dgangadhar@hotmail.com](mailto:dgangadhar@hotmail.com) or by telephone at 717-763-8545.
- ॐ Hari Youths are encouraged to participate in the temple activities.

## **OUR DEEPEST SYMPATHIES TO:**

Mr. Parimal Parikh and his family on passing away of his father and Mrs Niranjana Shah and her family on passing away of her brother Mr. Hasmukhlal Parikh.

Mrs Ushma Patel and her Family on passing away of her mother.

TO ALL HARI MEMBERS:

Many potential donors for the Gujarat Earth Quake Relief Fund have inquired whether they can request HARI to target their donations to specific organizations of their choice. It is HARI's intention to make sure that the donations reach the people in real need of help as quickly and efficiently as possible. With that goal in mind, the *Relief Coordinating Committee* will compile the names of all legitimate organizations, including those recommended by potential donors. However, no assurance can be given that the potential donor's request can be fulfilled. Therefore, such donors are advised to send in their donations directly to organizations of their personal choice.

<i>Event</i>	<i>Day &amp; Date</i>
New Year	Monday, January 1
Makar Sankranti/Pongal	Saturday, January 20
Vasant Panchami	Sunday, February 11
Maha Shivaratri	Saturday, February 24
Holi	Saturday, March 10
Gudi Padva	Saturday, March 24
Rama Navami	Sat-Sun March 31- April 1
Mahavir Jayanti	Saturday, April 21
Mother's Day	Sunday, May 13
HARI School Graduation	Saturday, June 9
Krishna Janmasthanmi	Saturday, August 11
Jain Paryushans	To be decided
Ganesh Chaturthi	Saturday, August 25
Navaratri Mahotsav	Wed-Thur Oct17- Oct 25
Vijaya Dashmi	Saturday, October 27
Karva Chouth	To be decided
Diwali	Saturday, November 17
Christmas Dance	To be decided

**HINDU AMERICAN RELIGIOUS INSTITUTE**

301 Steigerwalt Hollow Road  
New Cumberland, PA 17070  
(717) 774 -7750  
<http://www.haritemple.org>

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**Directions:**

Take Exit 18 Lewisberry Road, Off I-83.  
Make left at the STOP for Route 114 West.  
Go about 1/3 mile and make left on Steigerwalt  
Hollow Road. Go about 1/2 mile to HARI Temple  
on the right.

