

Haidakhandi Universal Ashram Newsletter

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August, 2012

Dear Friends,

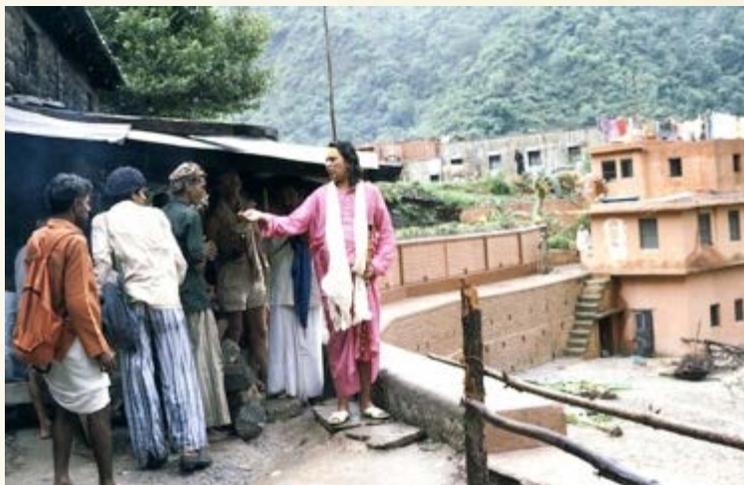
It seems that everyday life is entirely different from the day before and so very full. We have had a few (very few) days with just a couple of people here, a church group here for three days, Samaj meeting weekend, Family Week, a yoga group experiencing Ashram life here for four days, lots of other visitors and in between all of that, I headed to Milwaukee for a weekend to my nephew's marriage. (Photo from the wedding with my two grandsons.) It is quite a practice to keep Baba and the mantra present through all of the transitions particularly in crowded airports and airplanes.

And yet, the mantra is supreme. Even after missing a plane by one minute that my four grandsons, son and daughter-in-law were on (I was parking the car) as soon as I began repeating Om Namah Shivaya, I saw the beauty in just being quiet in the airport for a couple of hours as I awaited the next flight.

It seems as if Baba is using this constant movement and changing scenes to go deeper into my soul. Sometimes it is not easy to focus on the mantra when my head is in a tailspin, it is in those moments that the beautiful surroundings here, a photo of Baba or Mother hanging on the wall or just a friendly smile particularly from a child brings me back to a fuller consciousness.



I am reminded of the fullness of each day when I was in India with Babaji. Mornings often began at 3:30am with a bath in the Gautama Ganga River followed by chandan in Baba's room and a small fire ceremony in the dark outside His room. By 5am there was time for morning meditation in the temple or my room, then aarati and chanting, a bite to eat and it was still only 8am. The rest of the morning was spent doing karma yoga followed by lunch; a rest; more karma yoga; afternoon bath; evening aarati, chanting and darshan; a bite to eat and bed by 10pm or so. I was usually exhausted by the end of the day but somehow totally refreshed the next morning. I often felt that the fullness and



exhaustion was a wonderful tool for loosening my mind so that Baba could enter it and guide me. He is obviously still at work.

It has been a wonderful time here with all the folks coming. Our annual family week was by far the hugest ever and yet perhaps the most harmonious and joyful. I definitely need quiet time to recuperate my body but my mind and spirit are renewed by all the loving people, particularly children, that come to this Ashram.

Bhole Baba Ki Jai!
Ramloti

Ceremonies and Schedule

The full-moon fire ceremony this month is on Wednesday, August 1, the new-moon fire ceremony is on Friday, August 17 and another full-moon fire ceremony on Friday, August 31. The fire ceremonies begin at 10am and are followed by a meal. Our evening aarati is at 6pm and morning aarati is at 7am with a paduka puja in Shri Babaji's kutir each morning at 6:30am. Now that the weather is warm, we often have a daily small fire ceremony as well. Lunch is served at about 12:30pm and we invite you to join us. The Maha Lakshmi Shop is open every day from 10am until 5pm.

If you would like to participate by sponsoring a fire ceremony or the meal that follows, we would like to send you a blessed item from the fire ceremony. They are:

\$27 sponsorship - Copper, brass, nickel
Om Namah Shivaya bracelet
\$54 sponsors - Rosewood or Tulsi Mala
\$108 sponsorship - Rudraksha Mala or
Copper, silver, brass bracelet



You can make the donation online by just [clicking here](#) or you can call 719-256-4108 or e-mail the Ashram at info@BabajiAshram.org or send us a check made to HUA to: P.O. Box 9, Crestone, CO 81131.

We are continually grateful for all of your support of the Ashram.

Fall Navratri (Divine Mother Festival) October 15 - 23

Fall Navratri this year is running later than usual but it will still be a great time to honor the Divine Mother and thank Her for all that She gives to us moment to moment. It is Her love and nurturing that brings shakti (energy) to our lives that allows us to do our dharmas or callings.

These nine days set aside each fall and spring are momentous in energy as we are connecting with millions of people around the world that are also engaged in propitiating the Mother. Daily fire ceremonies, special pujas,

discourses, readings and lots of chanting and karma yoga are what await you if you come to the Ashram during these auspicious nine days.

We have already heard from folks in Florida, Canada, New Zealand, Washington and Denver that plan to be here. If you are flying, and would like to connect with other folks coming from the airport, contact the Ashram for their schedules.

Please contact the Ashram as soon as possible at 719-256-4108 or info@babajashram.org to reserve a space for you as it is usually totally booked, at least on the weekend. Jai Ma!



Karma Yoga & Ashram Projects

So much has been accomplished at the Ashram this month. The largest project was the painting of the whole temple and kirtan hall. After eight years of constant use and lots of ghee lamps and incense the lovely diamond plaster walls were in need of a facelift. We had washed the walls so many times that the finish was coming off so we needed to transition to a painted surface. Fortunately, AFM Safecoat makes an excellent transitional primer and interior glossy paint that is non-VOC's, green and washable. We hired two local painters that did an excellent job and the interior looks like new again.

We also repainted the women's bathroom in the earthship and our pujari and local artist, Rita Berault, added her beautiful touch with flowers to make it a very special room to enter. We also sanded and painted the recycling bin and stair rail at the west of the earthship and large amounts of cleaning, baking and cooking went on in preparation of family week. We had a church group



here for three days and they helped with the mitigation that was going on to make the Ashram safer in case of wild fire. They also helped with the tons of weeding needed during this rainy season and washing chunis and malas from the temple. Jata leveled three new campsites for our overflow during family week and lined them all with rocks.

We are so grateful to have so much help with these summertime upkeep tasks at the Ashram. Of course, this all costs money so we do ask each of you to look into your hearts and see what this Ashram means to you and to please donate as you are able. You may go to our website and [donate through PayPal](#) (you can even set up a monthly tithe). You can also send a check made out to HUA at P.O. Box 9, Crestone, CO 81131 or you can call us at 719-256-4108 with a credit card number. We want to thank you for your support, love and prayers.

Recent Events

Guru Purnima Celebration

The festival on the full-moon to honor your teacher, Guru Purnima, was a lovely and sweet day with many people in attendance. It is always a day to focus on the multitude of blessings given to us here at the Ashram and we are truly in awe and gratitude to the graciousness of Shri Babaji.



Annual American Haidakhan Samaj Weekend

Once again, about 20 people attended the Annual Samaj Meeting that was held at the Ashram. It is always great to have such diverse input from as far away as Canada, California, Washington and Oregon and from young devotees as well as older ones. Many new ideas were generated to reach more people who are wanting to be inspired by Shri Babaji and His teachings.



One of the ideas was to begin a Babaji American Samaj Group on Facebook which is already up with many new photos from the weekend and from family week. To sign up for that group please go to <http://www.facebook.com/groups/135863293221543/>. To read more about the Samaj or to become a member please go to www.BabajiSamaj.org

Annual Family Week and Children's Camp

Wow! Just when Family Week was getting great, it even got better and bigger. It was definitely the biggest Family Week we have ever had and probably the most harmonious and fun as well. Many new families joined us from all around the country and all seemed to be so generous hearted that all the work got done easily and joyfully. The chanting going on at dish time, made everyone want to join in and the sweetness of all the little children brought smiles to the face. The play put on by the children on the last day of camp was wonderful. It was just all so fine. Thank you to all who added their love to the week and we look forward to seeing you all again next year.



The Divine Mother as Nourishment with Sofia Diaz

It was another amazing and transformational workshop led by Sofia Diaz. As we focused on the different aspects and energies of the Divine Mother and the special qualities of nourishment that we experience from these, the shakti increased in the room to a final delightful crescendo. The



last day we had 34 participants sharing in the processes, movement, singing, discussions and joy. To be together in this way nourishes the mind, soul and body. As we spread this love and nourishment to the whole world, it certainly seemed to travel to the furthest corners of the cosmos. We are so deeply grateful to Sofia for helping to stir this magic at the Ashram. To find out more about Sofia go to SofiaYoga.com.

Naina Spends a Month at the Ashram

Naina, aka Natalie Newman, has been coming to the Ashram for seven years for Family Week. This year becoming a senior in high school, she decided to come and spend a month at the Ashram to serve and have a deeper experience. Since she has always been a good helper in the past, we allowed her to come and she has been a big asset to the Ashram. Her favorite karma yoga is running and stocking the Maha Lakshmi Shop where her friendly and efficient skills are a big service. She also helps with the daily fire ceremony, pujari duties and any other duty she can perform with a broken wrist, which she broke three days before coming to the Ashram. She also chose this time to have mundan, (head shave) for the first time. As you can see, as the month is coming to the end, she is glowing. Thanks Naina for all the help and joy you brought to the Ashram. Here is her story.

I've been coming to the ashram for Family Week annually since I was 10 years old, but this summer I decided to stay for the entire month of July. Visiting the ashram has always been a powerful experience for me, due in large part to the connections I've made with others while here. I cherish the insightful conversations and warm hugs that I share with all my ashram friends, both those I've known since my first visit and the new ones I make each Family week. My relationship with each of the residents has grown especially; even in the chaos of constantly changing visitors and events, they provide a solid, reliable foundation. Just from being in their presence every day, I have learned much from them all: I am continually inspired by Johnathan's hard work and humility, Prem's dedication and devotion, and Ramloti's affection and ability to organize everything with grace.

While my most recent stay has maintained, and even magnified the extent of such interpersonal connections with both the residents and the visitors who pass through, it has also provided a

haven for my own personal growth. I feel that I have gained a new level of responsibility and independence from contributing to the community here, running the shop, directing new visitors, and performing all my Karma Yoga one-handed (I broke my wrist a week before coming to the ashram). I've learned how to learn more fully, and I've only begun to understand what I have to offer to others. My spirituality has been augmented as well, on many levels— I have actually felt my heart and mind opening each day for the past month, I've learned to perform a small fire ceremony, I shaved my head, I've started to understand more about recognizing and managing my ego, and I can sing all of Aarati without the book (except for the Hanuman Chalisa, which is still pretty intimidating). To be honest, I'm feeling pretty sad at the prospect of leaving in a few days; it seems like July has raced by. I know, however, that I'll always have a home here, full of love for me to return to, as well as with each person who I've met and connected with during my stay.



Naina with some students, she is in the yellow sari.

So Many Groups Visit and Help at the Ashram

This last month has seen so many groups here at the Ashram. Several stayed a few days here and really contributed to the upkeep and work at the Ashram. We are grateful to them and know that we will see some of them again.



Visitors to the Ashram

A hugely busy month and so much love and happiness spread through the Ashram from all of the visitors. Here are photos of a few of them. This newsletter could not possibly hold them all. We do love and appreciate you all though. Some of our visitors returned after living several years in India.





Calendar for 2012

August 1 - Full-moon fire ceremony at 10am followed by a meal.

August 15 - New Moon fire ceremony at 10am followed by a meal.

August 31 - Full-moon fire ceremony at 10am followed by a meal.

October 15 - 23 - Fall Navratri - Divine Mother Festival with daily fire ceremonies, pujas, discourses, reading, chanting and other ceremonies.

November 13 - Diwali, Festival of Lights

Maha Lakshmi Shop Report

The Maha Lakshmi Shop is full to the brim with lots of beautiful items including new saris, kurtis and kurtas. Please call if you are need of these and we can help you with them.

Please also check out our lovely new collection of malas, both 108 and 27 bead (wrist size). We



are particularly excited about the new green sandalwood malas. See it also on our website. Yes, our new Shop website is up and is easy to use! We invite you all to take a look and even spread the word to friends. Just go to to our Ashram website, www.BabajiAshram.org and pull down the store button in the upper left corner or go directly to <http://mahalakshishop.wazala.com/>

You are also still welcome to call us and ask about all of the wonderful items in the Shop. You may call every day from 10am until 5pm Mountain Time at 719-256-4108 with your questions, or to place an order with a credit card like in the olden days. It is really nice to connect in this way, we love to talk to you. We accept Visa, Mastercard or Discover.

The Shop is a major support of the Ashram, so we deeply appreciate your patronage.

Maha Lakshmi Mata Ki Jai!

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