

# Haidakhandi Universal Ashram Newsletter

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## September, 2012

Dear Friends,

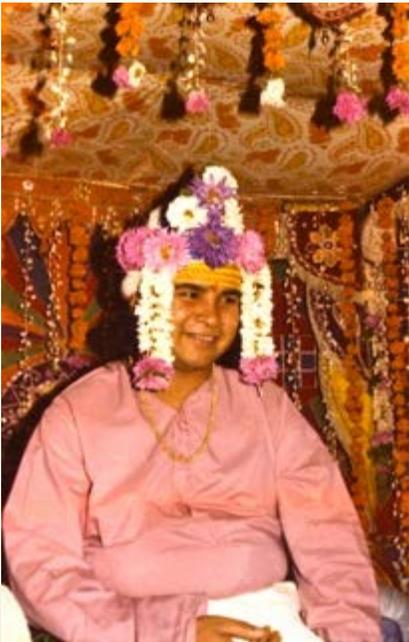
As most of you know, our beloved teacher, Shri Muniraji left his body on August 4. I had written earlier in the year that he had undergone major heart surgery. He seemed to be recovering well and even considered going to Holland for the large Guru Purnima celebration in July. As the time approached however, he decided he was not well enough and indeed he seemed to have one health set back after another the last month before he died shortly after his 84th birthday. Until the end he was his soft, peaceful and giving self that we all had grown to know and treasure so deeply. I saw a short video of him taken on August 1 thanking everyone for their prayers, encouraging everyone to live in brotherhood and service and reminding us all to be happy.



I am deeply grateful to have spent a week last summer in Moscow in his loving presence. I was also blessed with a warm and instructive dream of him three days after his passing. As I would always tell him when I called him, I love you Shri Muniraji very, very, very much. He would always just giggle and say to give his love to everyone in America. Shri Muniraji Maharaj Ki Jai!

As Muniraji spoke of brotherhood, so Shri Babaji also spoke of a time coming when there would be a great reorganization in the world where people as different as the lion and the lamb would live together in peace and harmony. Last Sunday after morning aarati we read from Shri Babaji's teachings that the change in the past had taken weeks in the Mahabharata but that this time it would take place in a day. What if today is the day? This is what suddenly popped into my mind as we danced around the temple in sheer ecstasy and bliss. Six Nepalese families from Denver were staying at the Ashram and we were joined at the small fire ceremony that morning by a party of seven young women who came to Crestone for a bachelorette party of all things. (They had called ahead and told me they wanted to have a different kind of party that was more spiritual. I think they got more than they ever could have imagined.)

After the



fire ceremony, we bedecked the bride-to-be in bracelets, a necklace and earrings that had been offered to the Divine Mother. We then went back in the temple to take photos. Suddenly all were dancing around the temple. Side by side we had Nepalese elders in their 80's, young women from Denver in their 20's or early 30's, children and everyone in between. I could feel Baba laughing and dancing right along side of us. Once again, another wonderful expression of the humanity beyond division that He spoke of so often. The morning continued with breakfast and the Nepalese couples (some had been married for over 50 years) sharing words of advice to the young woman. The women departed after breakfast with contact numbers for their new friends in Denver and many smiles and hugs.

Bhole Baba Ki Jai!  
Ramloti

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## Ceremonies and Schedule

The new-moon fire ceremony this month is on Saturday, September 15 and the full-moon fire ceremony on Saturday, September 29. 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. During the warm weather, we 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](mailto: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.

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## **Fall Navratri (Divine Mother Festival) October 15 - 23**

All the dorm rooms are already booked for the Saturday night of Navratri (October 20). We still have a few more beds in the women's big dorm room and in the men's yurt space for that night but it is filling up quickly. We also still have rooms available for the other nights of the festival. It is always such a special time to be together 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 keeps the cosmos in tact.

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.

Please contact the Ashram as soon as possible at 719-256-4108 or [info@babajiashram.org](mailto:info@babajiashram.org) to reserve a space for you or to get information about alternative housing. If you are flying, and would like to connect with other folks coming from the airport, contact the Ashram for their schedules. Jai Ma!

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## Karma Yoga & Ashram Projects

Much work keeps going on at the Ashram during this beautiful time of year which brings so many visitors. We have had a wonderful amount of rain here which means lots of produce in the garden to make into meals, lots of flowers to make malas



for the temple and lots of weeding all over the Ashram. We have also been linseed oiling all of the wooden steps, tables, fences and doors; continuing on erosion control with rock work; building a new screen cover for the large havan kund and keeping up with supplying the Maha Lakshmi Shop with product during this busy season. We are already getting prepared for Fall Navratri and the sewing of Mother's nine new saris is well underway. We also had to replace the batteries in the temple.

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.

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## Recent Events

### Fire Ceremony in Memory of Shri Muniraji

It was shocking news on Saturday, August 4 when we found out that Shri Muniraji had left his body. I was actually at a 4:30am Vastu Puja in Alamosa when I heard and left it early so that I could arrive home to tell everyone at morning aarati and do a small fire ceremony in his honor immediately following.

But as others heard, they also wanted to be part of a function in Muniraji's honor, so we decided to have a large fire ceremony the next day. Shashi and Bipin Agarwal came from Denver that evening and brought Uday Chatterjee, a long-time devotee who was visiting from India, with them. I made some phone calls and posted notices. About 40 people attended a beautiful fire ceremony in honor of our beloved guru. It was a sad but deep time to be together and working in company to make the large feast that was served after the fire reminded us of Shri Muniraji's words to always work together and to be happy. Shri Muniraji Maharaj Ki Jai!



### Uday Chatterjee Visits the Ashram for Ten Days

It was a great boon to have Uday at the Ashram for ten days at the beginning of August. His love of Shri Babaji and Shri Muniraji was so evident and inspiring to all who spoke with him. His knowledge of the Sanskrit slokas that he shared with us at fire ceremony and then the explanations that followed were



deeply insightful for all of us. His light and joyful manner added to the sweetness of the Ashram and his generosity of spirit was a treat. Here is his story.

#### MY VISIT TO HUA IN CRESTONE

Before I describe my recent visit to the Crestone Ashram after a gap of eight years, I have to describe the background. When I was in the Loonen Ashram in Holland late June/early July for Gurupurnima, I met Shashi and Bipin Agarwal from Denver Colorado. I did not meet Ramloti, who was expected but was unable to join us for health reasons. So I had told Shashi and Bipin that I would try to come to Denver and go for a short visit to Crestone to visit Ramloti. However by the time I was in San Francisco via Germany, Paris, Vancouver etc at the end of July

somehow the schedule for me and the Agarwals' was not working out. In fact, I told Shashi that since I had firm commitments to go to Pasadena after San Francisco and she was going to New York to be with her daughter during the days I was hoping to come to Denver and visit Crestone, I would reschedule it for next year. In my mind that was kind of settled.

Then something strange happened on 31st of July morning. My friend in San Francisco took me for a brunch to a restaurant in Oakland that serves Soul Food and has a celebrity chef. It was no reflection on the cuisine, but on coming back home I was afflicted with a strange foreboding. I could not quite figure out the reason but thought it was my nearly five weeks of being away from home. My friends in San Francisco were both Professors and reasonably bohemian and single/separated. I, in my wisdom, thought a loving home of my sister Shashi is the answer to my unease and to cut the long story short I changed all my well laid out plans. I landed up in Denver on 3rd August in the afternoon .

It was only the next morning when I woke up that I learned that about the time I reached Denver our beloved Muniraji left this world for his heavenly abode. That is how I landed up in Crestone to pay my homage to my beloved Muniraji. My first two nights were very emotional but I felt a great sense of gratitude by the turn of events which brought me to one of Muniraji's Universal Homes. The peace and serenity of this vast and beautiful Ashram was a great solace for me. I decided to spend a few days in quiet solitude and meditation there.

I ended up spending ten days there. Everyday at the end of ararti there was a reading from the *Teachings of Babaji*. I heard the glories of Karma Yoga again and again. So I eagerly did Karma Yoga myself and managed the following with or without distinction 1.Rookie Gardner (cleaning the weeds) 2.Rookie Painter 3.Dal Maker 4.Rookie Temple Assistant ( I applied Tika to about 50 visitors on a busy Sunday) 5.Conducted Havan Ceremony one morning, recited slokas at the other daily fires and led discourses on their meanings 6. Shared stories about Babaji to various first time visitors 7.Masala Chai Maker and last but not the least 8. A Rookie Cookie Maker. But on a serious note I truly experienced the Glory of Karma Yoga. This is something that I take back from my days spent at the Ashram in Crestone.

But it was not all work. Just as divinely as my trip happened, I had opportunities to go on beautiful treks in high altitude up to 11, 000 feet. Some people whom I did not know before came and picked me up, took me on this beautiful trek and dropped me back to the Ashram. My thanks to my new friends Erica and Professor Brian Jacknin. We went for a

night out in town for an evening of music and dance and it was surreal to be in a Night Club in Crestone dancing to the beat of Indian Spiritual music. I and my friend Jonathan drank a glass of Kambucha which looks like beer but is made from fungus. I also had great fun courtesy of my new friend Barry Reinhardt from Houston who was also a first timer in Crestone. He miraculously had an extra ticket on a scenic train and a Music Concert by no other than legendary Michael Murphy-a King of the Cowboy/Country music genre. It was a beautiful train ride and a wonderful day out listening to music which was connected to land and the mountains and forests.

I cannot finish my little piece without mentioning the sheer dedication with which Ramloti has nurtured this Ashram for so long. She is clearly blessed and inspired by Babaji and Muniraji. I was also deeply moved by the dedication of Premanand and Jonathan. I have decided to be a part time gardner and painter for my wife from now on. Incidentally the garden at Crestone is truly a monument to the hard work put in by Premanand and Jonathan and is incredibly inspiring apart from supplying most of the requirements of the Ashram kitchen during the summer. Incidentally the Ashram Kitchen was a happy place to be in and a lot of Satsang took place while we drank tea or green smoothies.

May I say that I spent some very inspiring and memorable days at the Ashram. It is a true home of Babaji and Muniraji. I will look forward to coming back here soon and a heartfelt thanks to Ramloti, Premanand and Jonathan for their Love and Generosity.  
Bhole Baba Ki Jai

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## **Sofia Diaz's Women's Retreat Visit the Ashram**

It has become a tradition for Sofia to bring all the women that are attending her six day women's yoga retreat at the Zen Center to the Ashram for a ceremony. This year it was the new-moon fire ceremony followed by chanting, dancing and satsang. It was a very high and inspiring time as both Premanand and I told several stories of Shri Babaji and Muniraji. Over an hour slipped away as the stories flowed and we all had to hurry back to the Zen Center for lunch. I was part of the retreat too this year, a much needed letting go of responsibility after a extremely busy summer and an opportunity to rebuild some of the strength that had diminished during my illness.



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### Update From Ram Dass (JD Marston)



Due to the Grace of God and the kindness of friends, this body is once again ambulatory! Although there are many challenges still ahead, it is a great gift to be able to say I can walk again, almost normally...Thanks so much for all your kind words and thoughts, which I have appreciated so very much!

Love and best wishes,  
JD

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### Visitors to the Ashram

Lots of visitors and lots of love. So many people feel like this is their second home. Here are photos of a few of them. This newsletter could not possibly hold them all. We do love and appreciate you and look forward to your visits.





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## Calendar for 2012

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

September 29 - 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

## Calendar for 2013

January 14 - Makar Sankrant

February 14 - Shri Babaji's Mahasamadhi

March 10 - All- night chanting for Maha Shivaratri

March 11 - Maha Shivaratri fire ceremony at 10am followed by a meal

April 10 - 18 - Spring Navratri - Divine Mother Festival with daily fire ceremonies, pujas, discourses, reading, chanting and other ceremonies.

July 22 - Guru Purnima

July 24 - 27 - Annual Family Week w/ concurrent Sofia Diaz Workshop.

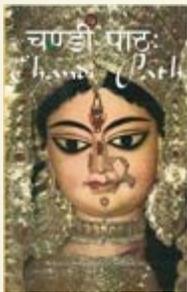
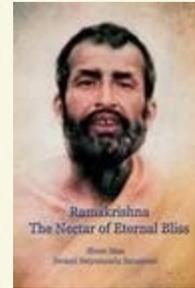
October - 4 - 12 -Fall Navratri - Divine Mother Festival with daily fire ceremonies, pujas, discourses, reading, chanting and other ceremonies.

November 3 - Diwali, Festival of Lights

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## **Maha Lakshmi Shop Report**

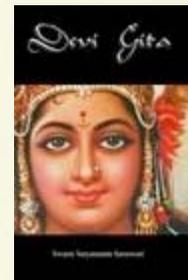
The Maha Lakshmi Shop is full to the brim with lots of beautiful items including inspiring new and old books. I have just begun reading one of the latest arrivals, *Ramakrishna, The Nectar of Eternal Bliss* (\$25) by Shree Maa and Swami Satyananda Saraswati and I am already captured by the beauty of it. I must say that the two books that remain next to my bed are such a source of inspiration and joy to me. These are *Sansmaran* (\$20) and *From Age to Age, Stories of Haidakhan Babaji* (\$12). They both contain such beautiful stories and can just be opened randomly, as I do most nights, for a nurturing and peaceful good night to a busy day.



Please also check all of our new collection of books on our website. We have several new and old ones that are perfect for the upcoming Fall Navratri time as they are about the Divine Mother. They are the *Chandi Path* (\$25.50), *Devi Gita* (\$19.95) and *Lakshmi Puja and Thousand Names* (\$19.95) all by Swami Satyananda Saraswati. and 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 our Ashram website, [www.BabajiAshram.org](http://www.BabajiAshram.org) and pull down the store button in the upper left corner or go directly to <http://mahalakshnishop.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!