

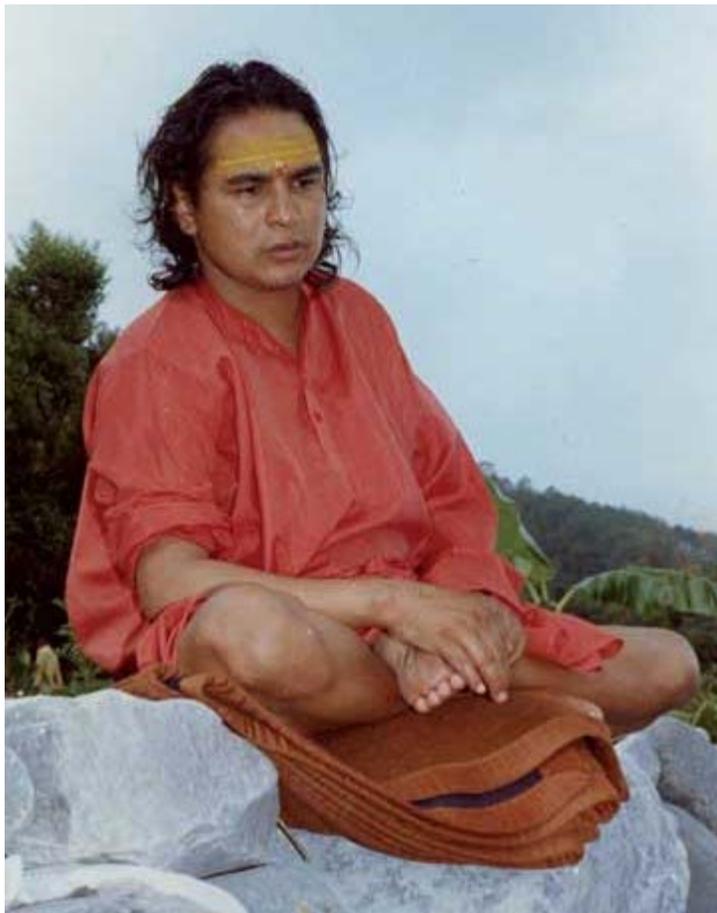
Haidakhandi Universal Ashram

Mission Statement:

We aspire to live the teachings of Haidakhan Baba, to hold this Ashram as His home, to serve humanity, and to be stewards and caretakers of this land.

September, 2006

Dear Friends of the Ashram,



We are just a week away from Fall Navratri, which begins on Saturday, Sept. 23 and goes through Sunday, Oct. 1. We have so much for which to be grateful, particularly all of the rain which has really turned around our drought situation. The harvest in the garden has been abundant and the aspen and cottonwood trees along the creek are beginning to turn golden. It is a magnificent time of year to celebrate our gratitude, love, and devotion to the Divine Mother. We hope you can join us.

Prem and I will leave after Navratri to lead chanting evenings, fire ceremonies, and kirtan in Denver, Eugene, OR., and Monroe, WA. More information can be found below in the article, Traveling with Shri Babaji.

Shortly after our return, we will celebrate Diwali, the Festival of Lights on Saturday, October 21. This is truly one of my favorite celebrations when many of the spiritual groups come together at the Ashram sharing songs of peace and light. Read the article below for more information.

Our daily schedule includes morning and evening aarati (chanting) at 7am and 6pm (after September 21) and a large fire ceremony on full-moon (Friday, October 6) and new-moon (Saturday, October 21) at 10am followed by a bhandara. If you would like to sponsor a fire ceremony (\$108) or bhandara (feast) (\$108) you may make the donation on line by just [clicking here](#) or call at 719-256-4108 or e-mail the Ashram at info@BabajiAshram.org

In truth and love, Ramloti

Fall Navratri (Divine Mother Festival) Saturday, Sept. 23 through Sunday, Oct. 1



We are preparing for the big festival of Fall Navratri. Chopping wood for the havan; cleaning the temple from top to bottom; polishing all the copper; sewing nine new saris for Mother; making all of the crowns,



veils, lunghis and other gifts for all the children (last Navratri we had 50 children!); and preparing some tasty food goodies; are a few of the things to complete before the nine big days begin. Each of the days is so full of ceremony, pujas, readings, discourses, chanting, and satsang that there is barely time to prepare for the next day's ceremonies so we try to get as much done in advance as possible.

Each day we begin with chandan and chanting at 6:45am followed by aarati at 7am. We then perform puja to the



aspect of Mother that is being celebrated that day. (The first three days we honor Mother Durga, asking Her to do away with our habitual tendencies that keep us from our spiritual path. The second three days, we propitiate Mother Lakshmi, asking

Her to fill those voids that we have just cleaned out with satvic or pure tendencies. The last three days, we pray to Mother Saraswati asking Her to fill us with divine knowledge.) After the puja we read the Haidakhandeswari Sapta Sati (700 praises of the Divine Mother of Haidakhan). The havan (fire ceremony) begins at 10:08am and this is followed by a discourse from the Srimad Devi Bhagavatam (stories of the Divine Mother) from about 11:15 until noonish. We then serve lunch. The rest of the afternoon is time for some rest and preparations for the next day's ceremonies. Evening aarati and chanting is at 6pm.

As you can see, the nine days are full of wonderful opportunities to remember the Mother. Here is a photo of all the smaller murtis adorned after the morning puja. The Srimad Devi Bhagavatams, the sacred books about the Divine Mother, are also honored. This is a time of many, many visitors who come to share in the festivities. Last Navratri, although the final day was in the middle of the week and it was raining, we had about 150 people here. This Navratri ends on a Sunday, so it should be very full. We are pretty booked in the dorm for both weekends of Navratri already. If you would like to stay, please call the Ashram at 719-256-4108 or e-mail us at info@babajishram.org. and we can discuss options.



It is also possible to sponsor one of the fire ceremonies or bhandaras (feasts) during Navratri. We suggest a donation of \$108 for this and you may make the donation on line through PayPal by [clicking here](#), by sending a check to P.O. Box 9, Crestone, CO 81131, or by calling us with your credit card. Please don't feel that you have to be here personally to observe Navratri, people all over the world commemorate the nine days in their homes, thanking Mother for all She gives to us.

Traveling with Shri Babaji

From time to time, Shri Babaji would leave the Ashram in Haidakhan to visit devotees that had invited Him to come and bless their homes. This meant that every one at the Ashram was also invited and so we would hike out with Shri Babaji. This is a photo from summer of 1982 when my children and I were in Haidakhan. Shown here with Babaji are Sundar Singh, the founder of the Swiss Ashram and his daughter, Usha, one of my children's favorite friends at the Ashram.



Since Shri Babaji's Mahasamadhi, we carry on this tradition by taking Babaji's Padukas (sandals) to homes to bless them. We are fortunate to have a pair of His Padukas here at the Ashram that were given to us in 1983. They will be traveling to Denver, Eugene, OR., and Monroe, WA. Premanand and I will be accompanying them. We hope you can come and have Shri Babaji's darshan on one of these locations.

We will begin with a chanting evening in Denver on Wednesday, October 4 at 7pm in Spy Glass Hills Apartments community room. This is near Parker and Leetsvale. Call Arvind Suman at 720-933-7884 for more information.

We will then head to Eugene, Oregon where we will conduct a sacred fire ceremony on Saturday, October 7. There will also be aarati, chanting, Paduka puja, satsang, and a feast. For more information call Charles and Miyuki at 541-988-1172. We will also lead a chanting evening in Eugene on Sunday evening, October 8. Call Peggy for details at 541-767-1108.

Shri Babaji's Padukas will then go to Monroe, Washington where we will conduct a sacred fire ceremony on Saturday, October 14. There will also be aarati, chanting, Paduka puja, satsang, and a feast. For more information call Don and Kay in Monroe at 425-424-2322.

You may also call the Ashram for more information at 719-256-4108. To invite Shri Babaji's Padukas to your home, a formal letter would be more appropriate.

Diwali, the Festival of Lights, Saturday, October 21

Saturday, October 21 is Diwali, the festival of lights. This is the yearly celebration of darkness over light. If you were in India for the festival, you



would see every house and temple aglow in candles and lights. Here at the Ashram, we do the same. The day begins with the new-moon fire ceremony at 10:08am followed by a bhandara (feast). The rest of the day is spent decorating the temple, kirtan hall, earthship, and grounds with candles and lights. We are also busy preparing delicious food to serve after the evening program.

At 6pm, the candles are all lit and folks begin arriving for aarati followed by chanting. Since light is a common theme of the spiritual communities in Crestone, we take this opportunity to invite all of the groups to come to this festival and share a song from their tradition of peace or light. Over the years we have had the Catholic Carmelites, Tibetan Buddhists, Shumeis, Zen Buddhists, Sikhs, Native Americans, Christians, Sufis, and others share their songs and prayers with us. We then, all share a light meal and dessert in the candle-lit earthship. It is always a magical and powerful evening. Please join us if you can.

Kirtan Workshop and Concert with Vamadeva Thanksgiving Weekend, November 26



Vamadeva, who gave a great concert over Memorial Day weekend, has volunteered to come to the Ashram over Thanksgiving weekend to lead another concert as well as a kirtan workshop. The plans are still to be formulated and approved by our Board of Directors but keep the weekend in mind. If you have any ideas or input, we would be happy to hear from you.

Recent Events

Ganesh's Birthday



On Sunday, August 27, we celebrated Ganesh's birthday. Complete with Ganesh birthday cake, pujas to at least a dozen Ganesh's (friends brought theirs from home), aarati, chanting, and dinner: it was a wonderful celebration.

Raw Food Week



Preparing Coconut Cream Pie from raw young coconuts

Our first Raw Food Week at the Ashram was a great success. About 25 people participated in the various

lectures, video presentations, food preparations, meals, and discussions. Every one had fun, were very impressed with how delicious raw food can be, and gathered lots of new information. We have already had requests for another Raw Food Week. We will let you know when it is set.

Classical Indian Dance Performance



Puja Allepalli's dance presentation on the first of September was magnificent and beautiful. She and her husband were here at the Ashram for a few days before the performance and we had already fallen in love with their generosity and sweetness. But then to see her dance was beyond expectation. Every one that attended was so grateful they could be there. She has promised to come back and dance again soon. We will let you know when that happens. Thank you Puja.

Her organization, SHIVANJALI, focuses on teaching and promoting this powerful language of dance in its pristine form. For more information about it or about Puja, go to www.shivanjali.org.

Rich Garden Harvest



As I mentioned earlier, our garden has been abundant this year. It has been a special treat for our visitors, particularly the children, to be able to go out and pick the vegetables for the meal. This cabbage took three children to carry it! We have also had fun giving produce away to our neighboring spiritual centers and to other folks in the community. The corn and winter squash was the center piece for our last fire ceremony and bhandara and every one was invited to take some home with them. They all knew how tasty it was because we had squash/potato soup, squash cake, salad, and 40 ears of corn for the bhandara.

Kirtan Hall Update

As our large celebrations of Navratri and Diwali approach, we are once again so grateful for the spacious, new kirtan hall where every one can sit. Looking back to pre-kirtan hall days, it is hard to imagine how we all fit into the temple. Actually, we didn't. We were often falling out the doors!

We are happy to say that once again through your generous donations and purchases in the Mahe Lakshmi Shop, we were able to pay down the kirtan hall loan down to approximately



\$71,500.

Thank you to all who have helped. We appreciate your continued generosity to help pay off our loan as soon as possible. If you are able to send a donation, you can donate on line by [clicking here](#). You may also send it through the mail at: P.O. Box 9, Crestone, Colorado 81131. Thank you again.

Calendar for 2006

Sept. 23 - Oct. 1 - Fall Navratri, nine days honoring the Divine Mother

October 4 - Kirtan Evening in Denver, Colorado

October 7 - Fire Ceremony, Paduka Puja, and kirtan in Eugene, OR (541-988-1172)

October 8 - Kirtan Evening in Eugene, Oregon (call Peggy for details - 541-767-1108)

October 14 - Fire Ceremony, Paduka Puja, & kirtan in Monroe, WA (425-424-2322)

October 21 - Diwali, festival of lights

Calendar for 2007

February 16 - Shivaratri, all-night chanting

February 17 - Shivaratri fire ceremony at 10:08am followed by bhandara

March 18 - March 26 - Spring Navratri, nine days honoring the Divine Mother

July 23 - July 27 - Annual Family Week and Kirtan Workshop

July 28 - Annual American Haidakhan Samaj Meeting

July 29 - Guru Purnima

October 10 - 18 - Fall Navratri, nine days honoring the Divine Mother

Maha Lakshmi Shop Report

We are continually receiving new items for the Maha Lakshmi Shop. Some of our latest arrivals are these beautiful brass singing bowls which run from \$18 all the way up to \$750. The sound is



magnificent.

We also received a shipment from India of lovely jewelry and blouses, perfect for Navatri or Diwali gifts or any time. Call for more details, visit the shop, or our web site at BabajiAshram.org.



Just in time for Navratri and Diwali, we also have received these lovely children and young teens' suits. They range in sizes from about two-year olds to thirteen-year olds. They cost \$35 each.

You may [order on line](http://shop@babajiashram.org) through PayPal or e-mail us at shop@babajiashram.org, or of course, place the order over the phone on our toll-free number 1-866-686-4185. We enjoy hearing from you and normally send out your order within one or two days. Thank you for purchasing from us. It is a huge support of the Ashram and its work.