

Haidakhandi Universal Ashram Newsletter

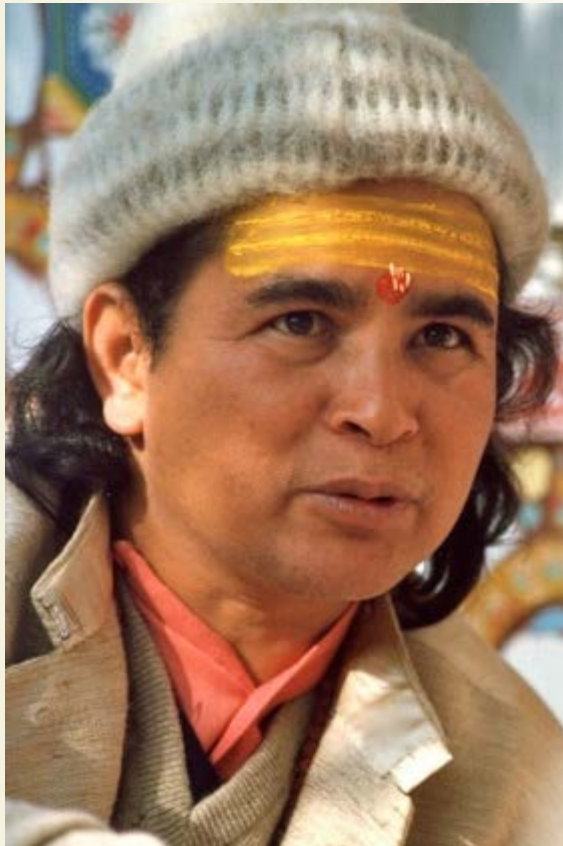
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October, 2013

Dear Friends,



As we step from Summer into Fall, I am reminded of Shri Babaji words: "Now the season is changing....Summer is taking a step toward winter. The change in climate engenders chemical changes in the body...." Well, this month of September has certainly felt this way with so many changes going on. It began with the sweetest kindergarten and first grade children coming to the fire ceremony. One of the little boys was particularly taken by it all and even figured out how to blow the conch shell by the end of it. As he left he told me he liked this place and would like to return. When I inquired who he was, I found out that he was the grandson of Safiya, someone I knew from the Spiritual Alliance.

A few days later, there was a terrible traffic accident and this woman was killed. As I attended her cremation and we shared stories of Safiya, I was reminded of the fragility of life and made a vow to live each day to the fullest. I also saw her little grandson there and realized how Safiya's love and exuberance for life will be carried on through him and others that she has touched.

That week I also greeted a young man who had been to the Ashram before but this time he had to be taken here by a friend since he could barely walk. He had been punctured through the stomach and lungs (just narrowly missing his heart) by a forklift. As we hugged, he just kept saying how grateful he was to be alive and that he wanted to come and thank the Divine Mother. Another woman who had just undergone emergency surgery for a gall bladder that had swollen to five times its size, made the Ashram her first outing to thank the Divine Mother for her life and to be among people who she felt nurtured by.

The next weekend I attended a gathering honoring Lorain Davis who had recently moved from Crestone after 30 years to Denver due to health reasons. (She turned seventy-five years old this summer.) About a hundred of us shared stories and our gratitude for a woman who had given so much to so many. Lorain, a Blackfoot Cree Native American, had led sweat lodges, attended Sun Dances, taught Native American Studies at Naropa University, and brought many Native American Elders to Crestone over the years. For the Ashram personally, she and her husband, David, had met Shri Babaji in 1979 and were very instrumental in organizing the first Babaji gatherings here in

Crestone in 1985 and 1986. They have both served on the Ashram Board of Directors. It was a poignant moment when she thanked everyone for coming and shared how deeply touched she was. She said that this kind of gathering should be held for people while they were alive, not just when they died. Of course my mind went immediately to the previous weekend's cremation and the different energy of both.

We also felt the enormous amount of rain that came to Colorado. We were blessed in Crestone to not have any flooding and could just appreciate all the life-giving moisture for our long drought thirsty trees. But we also felt the pain of others as we heard their stories of mudslides, flooding, loss of power, and other devastation. These are times when we are reminded of the power of Mother Nature.

I was also feeling some anxiousness over the preparations for Navratri. As I melted into my deeper realization that all would be taken care of by Babaji and Mother, Dora, our Native American friend walked into the earthship with her two beautiful grand daughters, Angel and Vanaiah. They are spending the school year here in Crestone with their Grandma and wanted to help at the Ashram. So for the last two Friday afternoons they have spent hours here helping with so many jobs making Navratri preparations fun and easy. But even more so, their sweet spirits, generous hearts, and interest in spiritual pursuits are so refreshing to see in an eighth and tenth grader.

As we rolled into this last weekend, we had our first freeze, lost many of our flowers and vegetables in the garden, noticed the ghee getting thick in the cold at our morning fire ceremonies, and watched the snow cover the top of the mountains. We also had many visitors, some old, treasured friends and many new friends who were deeply touched by their visits to the Ashram. A couple of the teenage visitors impressed me with their deep values and questions. I made a phone call to one of our dear older Indian friends who is in the final stages of cancer at his daughter's home back East and heard both the peace and the sadness in his voice and in the voice of his wife of 49 years. I also received a call from a woman in Gunnison who needed some hope and relief from her constant pain and organized a ride for her to come to Navratri for a few days.

Amidst all of this, we still managed to have a game of softball at the park last Sunday afternoon under a pristine blue sky and in perfect 70-degree weather. Good laughter (which our softball games generally have a lot of!) is a gift. I was particularly aware of this on the way home when I received a phone call from a friend who was in need of some companionship and talking, so off I went to spend the evening with her. Yesterday Jessica, Dora, Vanaiah and I spent the afternoon cleaning every nook and cranny of the temple getting ready for Navratri. I was exhausted and fell asleep like a baby at 8:30!

And so my life and emotions have felt a bit like a yo yo of change this past month. It has left me more deeply aware of how many people are suffering and in need, how much I have been given, and that there is also a lot of hope because of the deep faith and perseverance in people and the young folks who are growing up with a deeper sense of meaning of life.

With deep love,
Ramloti

Ceremonies and Schedule

The new-moon fire ceremony this month is on Friday, October 4 (the first day of Navratri with nine consecutive days of fire ceremonies) and the full-moon is on Friday, October 18. The fire ceremonies begin at 10am and are followed by a meal. Please arrive freshly bathed, in a long skirt or pants with shoulders covered, and having fasted from grains, cereals, meat, eggs, garlic and onions. (Fruit, yogurt, nuts, veggies and tea or coffee are fine to eat before. Also if you have

a dietary need for something more hardy before our meal at 11:30 or so, please partake.)

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. Lunch is served at about 12:30 pm, and we invite you to join us. (Call if you are a group or have special dietary needs.) The Maha Lakshmi Shop is open every day from 10am until 5pm.

If you would like to participate by sponsoring a fire ceremony or a bhandara (feast), 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 sponsorship - Rudraksha, Rosewood, or Tulsi Mala

\$108 sponsorship - Rose Quartz Mala or a copper, silver, brass bracelet



You can make the donation online by just [clicking here](#) or by calling 719-256-4108, or by emailing the Ashram at info@BabajiAshram.org. You may also 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 - October 3 - 12

Fall Navratri (the Divine Mother Festival) is only two days away. The festival runs from Friday, October 4 until Saturday, October 12. Folks are already arriving from Canada, Washington, California, Florida, New Zealand, New Mexico and all parts of Colorado. It should be a wonderful time, as always. The weather looks to be sunny and mild and the Ashram is quite ready to receive everyone.

It is such a blessed time to be together



doing fire ceremonies, singing, honoring, and discussing stories about the Divine Mother. If you cannot attend we are going to do our best to post a photo each day of Mother in Her new saris. Perhaps we will even have a short quote from a story of Her. You may also want to remember Mother in your home with a flower or incense each day. You can also sponsor a fire ceremony or bhandara during this time. You can read more about this above under Ceremonies and Schedules.

We already have people booked for these days but call or email the Ashram at 719-256-4108 or email us at info@babajashram.org and we can see if we can still accommodate you. Haidakhandeswari Mata Ki Jai!

Programs in Denver and Fort Collins - Fri, Sat, & Sun, Oct. 25 - 27

Ramloti will be up in Denver and Fort Collins leading chanting, puja, and satsang the weekend of October 25, 26, and 27.

The first event is on Friday, Oct. 25 at 7pm at Sony and Bijay Yerra's home at 6411 S. Jericho Circle, Centennial, CO 80016. We will have puja and chanting followed by dinner. For more information or directions please call: 267-218-2307.

The following day, Saturday Ramloti will be leading the chanting at the Dharma and Yoga Fest from about 3pm - 4pm. This is an all day event held at 8990 York. St, Thornton, CO 80229 (Academy High School). Call Smita at 303-920-7245 for more information.

The final one will be on Sunday at 11am followed by a potluck lunch at noon in Fort Collins. This will be at the home of Mohan whose address is 6215 Carmichael St, Fort Collins, CO 80528 and his phone is 970-207-0764.

We hope you can join us at any of these. Please call us at 719-256-4108 or email us at info@babajashram.org for more information.

Diwali - Festival of Lights - Sunday, November 3

Another very special day is Diwali, the festival of lights. This falls on the new-moon after Navratri and begins with a fire ceremony at 10am followed by a meal. The rest of the day is dedicated to decorating the temple, earthship, and grounds with candles and making sumptuous goodies for dinner and dessert.

The candles are all lit before aarati at 6pm and more and more people arrive as we come close to 7pm when we share songs of peace and light with the neighboring spiritual centers and other folks. It is always a spectacular evening. We still have some room in the dorm if you are coming from out of town. Please call us at 719-256-4108 or email us at info@babajiashtam.org for reservations or for more information.



Karma Yoga at the Ashram

Much of our karma yoga this month had to do with preparations for Navratri. Jonathan, Dhamananda, and Kevin spent days felling dead trees, transporting the logs, and then splitting and stacking it all. We are now well prepared for nine big fire ceremonies and the dorm has plenty of wood for winter fires as well. As I mentioned above, the temple and dorm have received thorough cleanings, Ma has nine new saris sewn for Her, the children have veils and lunghis made for them, and as much food and desserts as possible have been made in advance for all of the visitors. That along with all of the normal Ashram duties, such as oiling the stairs and feeding our many visitors, have kept us busy!

We are so grateful to all of the those who can come and help at the Ashram and to all of you that help make these projects possible by your financial donations. We 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) to 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

Kindergarten and First Grade Students Come to a Fire Ceremony

It is such a joy when the young children from the Charter School come to a fire ceremony. They are always so respectful and seem to really gain something from the experience. This fire ceremony was on only their third day of school this year. We were very impressed.



Dharmananda and Ramloti attend a Simulated Fire Training

Continuing to train to be able to help with protecting our land and other land in Crestone/Baca, Dharmananda and Ramloti joined with members of the Crestone Mountain Zen Center and Shumei International Institute for a day of training with the engine and two foam wagons. We were also joined by the Baca Fire Department with their truck. It was a great day.



Ganesh's Birthday Celebration

Ganesh's birthday was celebrated at the Ashram during the morning fire ceremony when all 14 of our Ganesh murtis were washed with panchamrit and dressed in new clothes and ornaments. It is always a busy but sweet day. Happy Birthday dear remover of obstacles!



Israeli Pilgrims Visit the Ashram

A group of fifteen Israeli pilgrims came to the Ashram for aarati, fire ceremony, breakfast, and satsang this last month. It is always enriching to learn about other people's paths, lives, and exchange views of the world.



Crestone Pays Honor to Lorain Davis

After living in Crestone for nearly 30 years, Lorain and her husband David moved to Denver. Lorain, a Blackfoot Cree Elder, had led sweat lodges, attended Sun Dances, taught Native American Studies at Naropa University, and brought many Native American Elders to Crestone over the years. For the Ashram personally, she and her husband, David, had met Shri Babaji in 1979 and were very instrumental in organizing the first Babaji gatherings here in Crestone in 1985 and 1986. They have both served on the Ashram Board of Directors. Here they are shown with Hope Elder, Thomas Binyaca and Ramloti.



Visitors to the Ashram

The warm weather has continued and we have continued to have a huge amount of visitors at the Ashram. There is no way that we can photograph all of our visitors and get them all in this newsletter but here are photos of some of them. We love you all. We will begin with an experiences from one of our recent visitors.

"Sitting in the temple, for the first time, I was blown away by the wide eyed photo of a young Babaji. His eyes appeared to be staring into a vast infinity that was unfathomable. Not only was this infinity reflected in his eyes, but it appeared to be what was behind his eyes. I was transfixed. My mind stopped. My heart opened. I felt perched on the edge of unknowable Reality, both beautiful and inexpressible. Also a little unnerving! I didn't want to look away and found my gaze returning to this image repeatedly during my stay. I'm so grateful for my time at the ashram. The sense of sacredness, respect and love were a profound experience for me. There were many wonderful highlights and sweet connections. It's a place that I know I will return to, for it now lives in my heart."

Love, Chloe Taylor









Calendar for 2013

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.

Calendar for 2014

February 28 - Shivaratri - All-night chanting followed by a fire ceremony at 10am on March 1.

March 30 - April 7 - Spring Navratri - Divine Mother Festival with daily fire ceremonies, pujas, discourses, reading, chanting and other ceremonies.

July 12 - Guru Purnima

July 19 & 20- Annual American Haidakhan Samaj Weekend and Meeting.

July 23 - 26 - Annual Family Week w/ concurrent Sofia Diaz Workshop.

September 23 - October 1, 2014 - Fall Navratri - Divine Mother Festival with daily fire ceremonies, pujas, discourses, reading, chanting and other ceremonies.

October 23, 2014 - Diwali, Festival of Lights.

Maha Lakshmi Shop Report

We have redone the Maha Lakshmi Shop website making it more easy for you to navigate. Please take a look at www.mahalakshishop/wazala.com and give us some feedback.

The Maha Lakshmi Shop is well stocked for Navratri and Diwali. We just received a huge shipment of wrist malas, prayer bells, and chunis. Many of our Shop items are on line, but you may still call the Ashram at 719-256-4108 and place your orders over the phone (every day from 10am until 5pm Mountain Time). We are happy to answer any questions. We take Visa, Mastercard or Discover. It is really nice to connect in this way. We love to talk to you.

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

Maha Lakshmi Mata Ki Jai!