



THE CONCH

www.theconchnewsletter.org

“Lord Sri Krishna and Arjuna blew their celestial conches to rally and enthuse the devotees.”

NEWSLETTER
of New Govardhana Community



Dedicated to His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, Founder-acarya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

YOUTH KIRTAN PARTY
2ND NOVEMBER

FEATURING

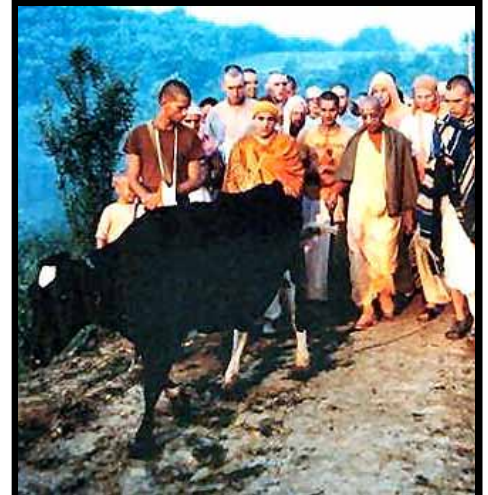
SRIDHAMA
JANARDAN
MALIKA
CHANDRA
LILA KIRTAN
DAMODARA
BHAJAN BABAS
KOHA

CHANT & DANCE (BRING YOUR GUITARS/DRUMS
ETC), CHAI LOUNGE, FREE PASTA DINNER,
ALCOHOL/DRUG FREE. 7PM - LATE
THE "WHITE HOUSE", KRISHNA FARM,
525 TYALGUM RD PUNGPIA

We are happy to announce the inaugural Youth Kirtan Party. This event is aimed at ISKCON's youth, who have always shown a keen enthusiasm for *kirtana*, dance and devotional music. It is open to those aged between 16 and 33 years, and will be held on a monthly basis. For those under 16 years of age parent permission is required.

The New Govardhana WWOOFer team is showing a growing interest in *kirtana* and will also participate.

The Youth Kirtan Party will be held in the "White House" at New Govardhana 2 November 2012 starting at 7.00 pm. For more information please contact Karunika devi dasi 0401 225 621



ISKCON Founder-Acarya His Divine Grace
A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Prabhupada uvaca ...

Lord Krishna, as the teacher of human society, personally showed by His acts that the mercantile community, or the *vaisyas*, should herd cows and bulls and thus give protection to the valuable animals.

According to *smriti* regulation, the cow is the mother and the bull the father of the human being. The cow is the mother because just as one sucks the breast of one's mother, human society takes cow's milk.

Similarly, the bull is the father of human society because the father earns for the children just as the bull tills the ground to produce food grains. Human society will kill its spirit of life by killing the father and the mother. It is mentioned herein that the beautiful cows and bulls were of various checkered colors—red, black, green, yellow, ash, etc. And because of their colors and healthy smiling features, the atmosphere was enlivening.

(Srimad Bhagavatam 3:2:29. purport)

A DEVELOPING COMMUNITY SPACE

by Leonardo Borsotti



Urvashi devi dasi

GURUKULA HALL & ARTS CENTRE

The Gurukula Hall recently received a Certificate of Occupancy from the Tweed Council, and over The Holy Name Retreat weekend showcased its unique hosting potential.

This gurukula facility, prompted by the Federal Government's BER grant, has taken years of voluntary work from devoted community members to attain this stage of

completion. Acknowledgments are due to many devotees, including Vilasa Manjari dasi and Gokula dasa for overseeing the design and construction of the hall, Vinod Bihari dasa and Ajita dasa for providing the financial drive from the school and farm, Mahamantra dasa for contributing his building expertise, private donors for their

contributions and many WWOOFers and other volunteers for their helping hands.

While several jobs remain to be completed, including boundary walls, lighting, furnishings and equipment, the hall administration will shortly be making this quality space available. Officially known as the Gurukula Hall & Arts Centre, the venue will host diverse events such as educational seminars and workshops, health and wellness retreats, sports and recreation activities for adults and children, cultural events and social gatherings.

Sponsors are welcome to help further this not-for-profit community project. Donations can be tax deductible.

Stay tuned for upcoming grand opening events on the developing site www.ghac.com.au, or contact Leonardo and Amber for expressions of interest in hiring the hall at lborsotti@outlook.com

EVERYONE IS A DEVOTEE

by Govardhana Seva dasa

Experience the joy and satisfaction of seeing the visitors' smiles, and their faces lighting up when you welcome them to the New Govardhana Community.

It's so easy, just go up to any individual or group and ask the question "Is this your first visit to New Govardhana?" If the reply is "Yes", then say, "Welcome to the community, we hope you enjoy your visit. Would you like

any information?" If the reply is affirmative, then you can direct them to Ekadasi devi dasi or Govardhana Seva dasa at the Visitor's Information Table, which is open on Sundays and/or Festival days. Alternatively, show them the Visitor's Information Stand on the wall to the right of the Temple Shop door, where they can obtain a free copy of the Visitor's Handbook. It's also nice to ask them where they are from, have a conversation with

them and answer any questions that they might have.

If they have been to the farm previously, then simply welcome them back and wish them a happy visit.

A majority of the visitors will really appreciate your welcome and the smiles on their faces really do give a feeling of pleasure and satisfaction. Remember . . . today's visitors could be tomorrow's devotees!

INTERFAITH AND CHAPLAINCY

by Govardhana Seva dasa

During the recent Holy Name Retreat, we were privileged to have the association of Bhakta dasa and his wife Bhakti devi dasi.

Bhakta, ably assisted by his wife, is the Associate Director of the Interfaith Organisation for Australia.

While visiting New Govardhana, he gave a short seminar for devotees explaining his role in the Australia-wide Interfaith Organisation in which he represents ISKCON.

This organisation comprises representatives from many of the different religions. Their purpose is to bring back spirituality to the youth and general community by creating an ecumenical program, supported by different religions and spiritual groups.

Bhakta regularly visits hospitals and prisons in Melbourne as a Hindu chaplain and explained to the group the details of that role.

He informed the meeting about available government funding for the training of chaplains and invited devotees to submit their names and email addresses in order to receive further information.

A NEW ADDITION TO THE FARM ... OR TWO MILLION !

by Kirsty Potangaroa, photos by Urvashi devi dasi

There is a new family who have recently moved to the New Govardhana Community . . . a family of worms!

The worm farm is located between the sheds near the lower guesthouse. The addition of a worm farm is a small part of a grand plan for New Govardhana. As you may have noticed recently, there is a lot of construction going on. Many great projects are happening around the place, such as:

Building: Several new buildings are manifesting; a new bullock shed has been erected, a bramacharini ashram is in place, the new amenities and the 'shipping container' rooms are expanding the accommodation area for WWOOFers and guests, and the school hall is now complete.

Work is steadily progressing on the New Govardhana Parikrama path where visitors will be able to circumambulate Govardhana just as in India. In addition, plans are waiting to be given the final nod by Council, then building for a new bramachari ashram will start, followed by an industrial kitchen, and lastly, a brand new

even leaving a surplus. Many of the volunteers are spiritual-seeking souls, finding refuge amongst the community here. This has prompted development of a new morning program (separate to the temple program) of yoga, *kirtana* and philosophy to assist in learning about spiritual life.

All the developments around the farm, especially agriculture, require the soil to be in a desirable condition. Tests have shown the farm soil to have many good qualities but is seriously lacking in carbon and organic matter. To regenerate the soil, the liquor produced from the worm farm is used as a natural fertiliser. At present one worm farm has been built, with the aim to build eight. Every eight weeks the worms produce one ton of worm casting which creates approximately 15 litres of liquor. The liquor is used to spray over the plants and soil.



The power of, for example redworms (eisenia fetid), is staggering, and many people now own a "worm farm"

Each worm farm unit contains approximately 80,000 worms that multiply enough to start other units.

The worms are a vital factor in the recycling program at New Govardhana. All raw food scraps, as well as mulch made from the sugar cane plates, cups and corn-starched spoons can be placed in the worm farm to break down. Very soon the community intends to purchase a machine that breaks down cooked food into a fertilizer for pasture as well as the gardens, leaving little waste created by the community. The result of all this will be large production of a natural fertiliser creating a desirable environment in which to cultivate.

The growth of the farm is always done in service to Krishna, to serve others and the environment, and to fulfil Srila Prabhupada's wishes of one day being self-sufficient and sustainable in every way possible.



WWOOFers Lulu and Tim chant Hare Krishna at the morning yoga perogram

temple. **The WWOOFing/volunteer program** is progressing nicely with around 25 volunteers at work daily. Several have been living at New Govardhana for months. Each person brings their own unique set of skills that are being utilised in service for Krishna. The agriculture has flourished under this nurturing team and a remarkable supply of produce is grown. Approximately 20 boxes of vegetables are produced per week. This supplies produce for the temple and Govinda's Restaurant (Burleigh),



Crops being tended by WWOOFer residents of New GOvardhana

KRISHNA FOOD FAVOURED AT FOLK FESTIVAL

by Mandakini devi dasi

New Govardhana's highly efficient 3 man catering team currently includes Krishna Gana dasa, Bhakta Theo and Bhakta Ben.

Requested by The Queensland Folk Federation to distribute Krishna cuisine at The Wallaby Creek Festival for the third year, our intrepid crew set off for the tiny village of Roseville, which is a 40 minute drive south of Cooktown.

This annual 3 day event attracts up to 4,000 alternative people interested in the workshops on solar power and bio-dynamics.



Rupa Durr and Srinivasa Luxton at a recent catering event

Many attendees are prasadam addicts, who make a beeline for the Krishna tent as soon as it opens. A serious glitch occurred on the very first morning with the breakdown of the all-important, electric vegetable cutting machine, which does the work of 2 people.

Already running late and wondering how they could catch up, our team was more than relieved when 2 enthusiastic would-be volunteers asked if there was anything they could do to help. Over the next few days, by Krishna's grace, another half dozen people manifested to assist in the cut-up, and our grateful crew distributed a total 1,000 plates by the end of the festival.

Many favourable people come back each year and the book table is reporting excellent sales. Two more festivals are lined up for The Tablelands at the end of October and the beginning of November.



Arjuna dasa and Jodie Walker at their recent wedding

THANKYOU ...

Jodie and I would like to thank all involved in making our wedding day better than we could have hoped. Particular mention is to be made to Damodara Pandit prabhu. Gangadevi devi dasi, Karunika devi dasi, Govinda Charan dasa, Padma devi dasi and other devotees who contributed behind the scenes preparing the delicious feast. Many visitors who had never been to the Temple before were so impressed with the mood and beauty of New Govardhana, your servant, Arjuna dasa.

CONCH REACHES FAR AND WIDE

My parents are always sending me the Conch Newsletter. It is usually my norm to ignore handouts, bulletins and community propaganda, but once I overcome this usual, habitual attitude and open up a Conch issue I am pleased that it has a friendly layout, people who actually mean something in my life and a reminder of how much really goes on in our humble New Govardhana community. I think our Conch is probably one of the more impressive publications in the global ISKCON. I just felt like this had to be said.

Your servant,
Madhavendra Puri dasa

A VISITOR'S LETTER

Hare Krishna,

On behalf of Virginia and myself, I would like to thank everyone in your community for the warm and friendly hospitality that was bestowed on us last Sunday. It was indeed an enlightening experience and we enjoyed it immensely.

From the time we arrived at the complex we were captivated by the peaceful serenity of the area. When the chanting in the temple commenced, we both sat outside for a short time, just enjoying the views of the mountains, and taking it all in.

After a short time, we went inside the temple and gradually entered into the spirit of the chant. We both felt this to be a fulfilling and gratifying part of our day.

We also found the reading that followed to be very interesting, and then, when the dancing commenced, it was the perfect way to end a very enjoyable experience. We could both feel the spiritual energy as it filled the temple.

The feast was the perfect way to end our first visit, and of course we had to visit the gift shop, where we purchased some small mementos to remind us of our experience.

In closing, thank you once again for the opportunity to visit your community, and we both look forward to seeing you all very soon.

Warm Regards,

*(*Incidentally, Virginia and James did visit us again two weeks later)*

Virginia and James.

GOSHALA GOSS

by *Urvasi devi dasi*

A lot has been happening in the *goshala* department recently. Some of the developments are completed, and others still in progress.

A large shelter for the cows is now being utilised in the Lagudi Paddock. This protects the cows from the elements, as well as serving as a feeding station. A rainwater tank will be installed to supply water for the cows. Lagudi Paddock is the front section of a bigger paddock which runs from the causeway at the bottom of the hill right up to behind the temple and all the way over to the neighbour's property. This large tract of pasturing land is currently being divided into four smaller paddocks which will make pasture management easier.

In another section of this pasturing ground, just a little north west of the temple, a dam is being constructed. This dam is fed by a crystal clear spring and is another much needed supply of water for Krishna's cows.

We are happy to report two of the Friesian cows, "Biggie" (Hladini) and Rukmini, are pregnant. Krishna's black bull Nrsinghadeva is the

"proud father" of both. The Gir bull Madhu, however, is still trying his best.

The goshala team would like to thank Padma devi dasi for her tireless work at ensuring Krishna's cows and bullocks get fresh veggie scraps daily. She has a pink bin specially marked in the food preparation area, so if you are a cook or helper, please remove all plastic labels or packaging and other non-edible matter before placing in the pink bin. If you would also like to re-cycle your household veggie scraps please contact her to find out how you can increase your *go seva*.

In the past month or so we have had a number of people enquire about sponsoring a cow. Most of them are Indians, who have a deep-rooted love and respect for Krishna's cows. Don't forget, everyone has the opportunity to become involved in *go seva* here at New Govardhana. As well as financially sponsoring cows or bullocks, there are many other opportunities to serve them. If you would like to participate in the cow protection program here at New Govardhana, but not quite sure how you can participate, please

contact Urvasi devi dasi who is only too happy to share all the cow love around.



Urvasi devi dasi

18 year old Govinda was called back to the eternal service of Sri Sri Krishna Balarama recently. He came to New Govardhana when he was only a few weeks old and was trained by Lilashuka dasa using a cart made from children's bicycle wheels and bamboo. He then went on to pull Their Lordships' cart in numerous parades and festivals up and down the north coast with gold painted horns. At temple festivals he enjoyed the company and attention of devotees and guests alike. He was retired from active service about 3 years ago and has been wandering the forests and pastures of New Govardhana ever since. He loved to eat, and especially liked to chomp on lotuses.



Conch: So this year Govardhana College had a very successful year?

Damodara Pandit dasa: Yes - extremely so.

The joint venture (with Mayapura Institute) "Bhakti Shastri Program" began with the Nectar of Instruction being taught by Anuradha devi dasi. This program delivered a world class evening adult study program. Almost 20 devotees attended evening classes and 15 successfully completed the study unit. We are having some problem with Padmanayana dasa's visa but we are still hopeful he will come in 2013, as well as Atul Krishna dasa, to help complete the Bhakti Shastri.

Conch: What else did Govardhana College do?

DPd: This year Govardhana College supported several seminars of visiting devotees such as HH Bhaktividya Purna Swami's series on Spiritual Life: Goals, Relationships and Processes. These seminars are always well attended and contribute to the upliftment of the New Govardhana Community.

We also tried a few new programs this year including hosting an Interfaith event in Murwillumbah. This Interfaith event created new friendships and opened new opportunities which we can build on. Govardhana College also hosted the first Bhakti Yoga Short Film Festival in Australia. This well attended and fun night out showcased devotee talent and culture to the wider community. This year in early September Govardhana College also co-hosted the Ed Mela. This educational conference attracted devotee educators from Australasia who shared best practices and curriculum ideas. This conference was praised by the ISKCON Minister for Education, Sesa dasa as ground-breaking and inspiring.

Conch: Then there was the Holy Name Retreat?

DPd: Of course, the big story this year was the Holy Name Retreat. This retreat was conceived of at a Govardhana College meeting in 2007. At that time HH Sacinandana Swami agreed to visit - just shows some things that take time are worth waiting for.

Conch: Partnerships with MI, seminars, visiting VIPS, retreats, film festivals and Interfaith — what else has Govardhana College got planned?

DPd: The exciting news is that Murwillumbah Community College has agreed to work in partnership with Govardhana College. What does this mean? Well, any courses that a devotee might like to run can be promoted by the Murwillumbah Community College. Teachers are well paid and the courses are all well advertised. So we are encouraging all skillful devotees to contact Govardhana College. We can help you in many ways.

NEW GOVARDHANA DEVOTEE SKILLS REGISTER

by Padma devi dasi

Since the inauguration of New Govardhana farm in 1977, it has become clear to both devotees and visitors alike that there exists an unusually high degree of talent and ability within our local devotee population. Over the past 35 years, devotees within the New Govardhana district have designed and created this entire devotional community by using, for the most part, our own skills, knowledge and ingenuity.

In order to preserve what we have so far achieved and to further develop our community, New Govardhana management has designed a Devotee Skills Register which will be available for all community members to access. This Register will contain listings of any types of work skills, knowledge, devotional service experience, tertiary qualifications, and talents that individual devotees in our regional area may possess. All community members are thereby encouraged to submit details of their own skills to the Register.

Please give this New Govardhana initiative your full co-operation by subscribing to the Register and help us show Srila Prabhupada how we can further our spirit of co-operation with each other in spreading this Krishna Consciousness movement. Further details, including how to submit to the Register, will soon be circulated in an email.

THE HILLS ARE ALIVE ...

by *Krsnarupa devi dasi (ACBSP)*, photos by *Urvasi devi dasi*

The rolling hills surrounding New Govardhana were vibrating with the sound of music, but Julie Andrews and the Von Trapp family weren't singing!

HH Sacinandana Maharaja conducted a retreat on the Holy Name from 4 - 7 October at beautiful New Govardhana, attended by more than 200 rapt participants.

Hosted by the generous efforts of Ajita das, New Govardhana's temple president, and the hospitable devotees of New Govardhana, I had the good fortune to attend this event.

With his gentle demeanor, disarming humour and undisguised enthusiasm, Sacinandana Maharaja swept us into a renewed focus for chanting Krishna's Name with attention and connection.

A combination of workshops, 'discovery' lectures, *vaisnava* exchanges, *japa* and *kirtana*, the event was one of the most potent I have attended in my years as an aspiring *vaisnavi*.

I have been chanting for four decades and well aware of bad habits that had crept into my daily *japa* practice. The Holy Name Retreat has inspired me to make a more serious effort to chant with focus, in a prayerful mood and renewed service attitude.

Thank you, Srila Prabhupada. Thank you, Sacinandana Maharaja, Madhava dasa and the team – and thank you New Govardhana devotees!



Participants join HH Sacinandana Swami and HG Madhava prabhu in some "warm up" exercises prior to hours of ecstatic kirtana

EDITORIAL GUIDELINES

Articles submitted to the Conch should contain 200 words or less and can be supplied in either MS Word format or typed directly into the body of an email. Photos must be submitted in JPG format.

All articles and photos must be sent to newgovconch@gmail.com by the 14th of each month. Articles and photos must include the names of the author and photographer. Your name will appear exactly as you submit it.



HG Madhava prabhu leads kirtana



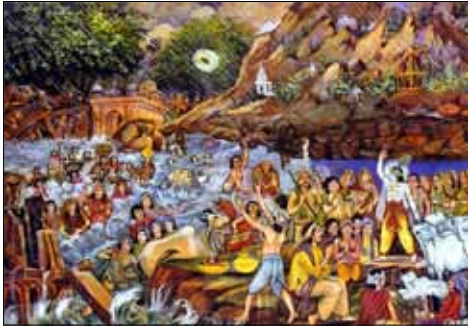
Maha Mantra prabhu takes devotees on parikrama of New Govardhana during free time at the Holy Name Retreat. This parikrama path will continue to be developed more and more.

EDITORIAL BOARD:

Damodara Pandit dasa, Mandakini devi dasi, Govardhana Seva dasa, Urvasi devi dasi (Layout and Graphic Design)

For enquiries, comments or suggestions please contact www.theconchnewsletter.org

UPCOMING EVENTS IN NOVEMBER



Govardhana Puja

Govardhana Puja, Go-Puja and Annakuta are all connected with the story of Lord Krishna lifting Govardhana Hill to protect the inhabitants of Vrindavan from torrential rains. On this day devotees build with sweets a replica of the hill, which they then circumambulate. Cows are especially honoured on this day, being dear to Lord Krishna. Large quantities of food are made by devotees and offered on the altar and then distributed to everyone. Hence the name 'Annakuta': Anna meaning 'made from grains'.

We are celebrating this year on Sunday 11 November :

2:00 pm *Kirtana/bhajana*

2:30 pm Feed the cows

3:15 pm Bathing ceremony (*Abhiseka*) of Lord Giriraja in temple room

4.00 pm Procession with Lord Giriraja to marquee

4:15 pm Darsana of Lord Giriraja on top of *prasada* hill and class on Govardhana Parikrama by Maha Mantra prabhu

5:00 pm Circumambulate Lord Giriraja/*kirtana*

5:30 pm Feast

Srila Prabhupada Disappearance Day

10:00 am *Bhajan*s and readings

11:45 am *Bhoga* offering

11:55 am *Puspanjali*

12:00 pm *Arati*

12:30 pm Feast

7:24 pm candle lit *arati* for Srila Prabhupada followed by Prabhupada Katha movie



HARINAMA SANKIRTANA KI JAYA



Wednesdays 10.30 am

Byron Bay Hari Nama at the park opposite the Post Office. For further details and transport information

Parama Karuna dasa
0439 280 362

Friday Evenings 6.30 pm

Bhakti Centre Surfers Paradise
bhakticentregoldcoast.com.au

Sunday Mornings

Northern NSW & Gold Coast
folkkrishna.com/program.htm
Isvara dasa 0411 825 549

NOVEMBER CALENDAR

(from the online Vaisnava calender www.vaisnavacalender.com)

- 4 Su Srila Narottama Dasa Thakura — Disappearance
- 7 We Appearance of Radha Kunda, snana dana, Bahulastami
- 8 Th Sri Virabhadra — Appearance
- 10 Sa Ekadasi (suitable for fasting) Fasting for Rama Ekadasi
- 11 Su Dvadasi Break fast 4.50 am- 9.18 am
- 14 We Dipa dana, Dipavali, (Kali Puja)
- 15 Th Go Puja, Go Krda, Govardhana Puja.
Bali Daityaraja Puja
Sri Rasikananda — Appearance
Sri Vasudeva Ghosh — Disappearance
- 17 Sa Srila Prabhupada — Disappearance
- 21 We Gopastami, Gosthastami
Sri Gadadhara Dasa Gosvami — Disappearance
Sri Dhananjaya Pandita — Disappearance
Sri Srinivasa Acarya — Disappearance
- 22 Th Jagaddhatri Puja
- 24 Sa Ekadasi (suitable for fasting) Fasting for Utthana Ekadasi
Srila Gaura Kisora Dasa Babaji — Disappearance
- 25 Su Dvadasi break fast 4.45 am - 9.18 am
- 27 Tu Sri Bhugarbha Gosvami — Disappearance
Sri Kasisvara Pandita — Disappearance
Last day of the fourth Caturmasya month
- 28 We Sri Krsna Rasayatra
Tulasi-Saligrama Vivaha (marriage)
Sri Nimbarkacarya — Appearance
- 29 Th Katyayani vrata begins