

# THE CONCH

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

## NEWSLETTER

of New Govardhana Community

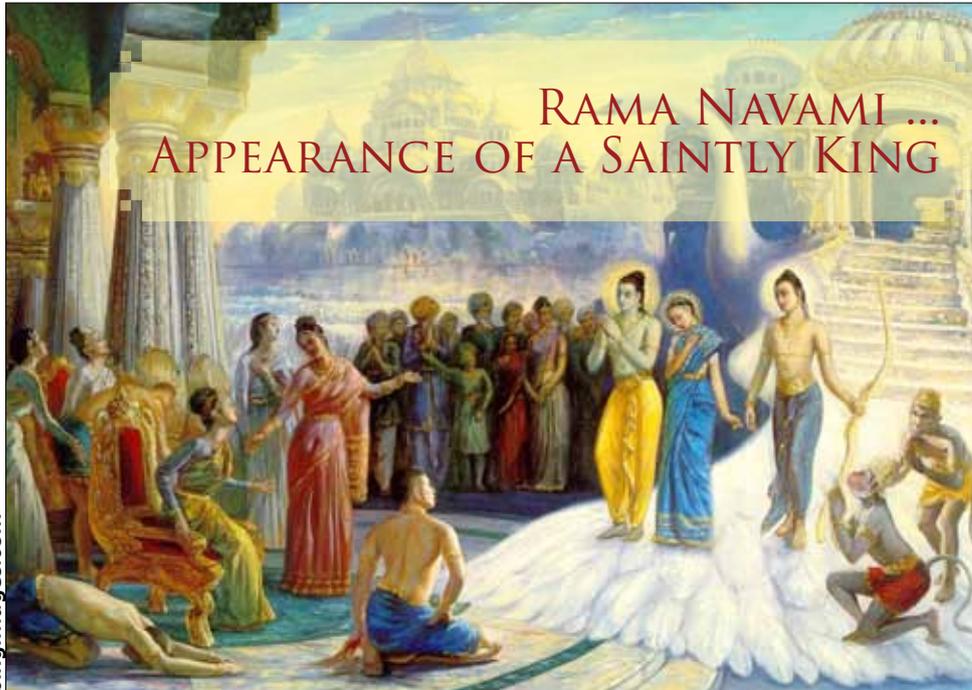
April 2013



krishnafarm.com

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

## RAMA NAVAMI ... APPEARANCE OF A SAINTLY KING



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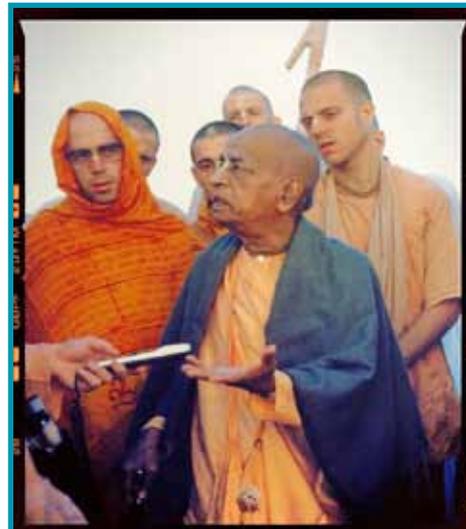
Exacted in part from [www.krishna.com](http://www.krishna.com) by Urvashi devi dasi

In the age known as Treta Yuga, Krishna appeared as the avatar Rama, the valiant king, setting the standard for heroism, morality, virtue and good government. The story of Lord Rama is told in detail in the epic Ramayana. Lord Rama appeared in the dynasty of the Sun god, as the son of King Dasharatha and Queen Kaushalya of Ayodhya. He was heir to the throne of greater India and had three younger brothers, Bharata (son of Rama's stepmother Kaikeyi), and the twins Lakshman and Shatrughna. Under the tutelage of His family guru Vishvamitra, Rama studied martial arts and defeated several demons. In a contest of heroes to win the hand of the beautiful Princess Sita in marriage, Rama was victorious. He was able to lift, string and break the mighty bow of Lord Shiva, which other contestants could not even move. Sita gladly accepted Rama as her husband and there was a magnificent wedding. All was well in Ayodhya and Rama was about to be crowned king at his father's retirement, when... *(You may want to continue to read the next, exciting part of this pastime in the pages of Srimad-Bhagavatam, Canto 9, Chapters 10-11)*

Devotees of Krishna celebrate the appearance day of His avatar, Lord Rama, by fasting until sunset and increasing their hearing and chanting about the Lord's pastimes.

The great saints say that the name of the Lord is non-different from the Lord, and that by chanting His name we can associate with the Lord and keep His company. By uttering His sacred name we call upon Him, invoking His presence.

So think of Lord Rama. Read about him. Hear about Him. Chant His name. Cook a vegetarian dinner in His honor, offer it to Him with love, and invite friends over to eat the *prasadam*, sanctified food, or join us here at New Govardhana for a sumptuous feast.



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

*Prabhupada uvaca ...*

**In the eighteenth incarnation, the Lord appeared as King Rāma. In order to perform some pleasing work for the demigods, He exhibited superhuman powers by controlling the Indian Ocean and then killing the atheist King Rāvaṇa, who was on the other side of the sea.**

The modern scientists have done research in the area of weightlessness, but it is not possible to bring in weightlessness anywhere and everywhere. But because weightlessness is the creation of the Lord by which He can make the gigantic planets fly and float in the air, He made the stones even within this earth to be weightless and prepared a stone bridge on the sea without any supporting pillar. That is the display of the power of God.

*(Srimad Bhagavatam Canto 1,  
Chapter 3, Text 22)*

# SNAPSHOTS ...

“O Govardhana, O hill that by nourishing the cows with its water, grass, and the shade of its trees declares to the three worlds the appropriateness of its own name. Please grant to me residence near you”.

Note: Govardhana means “that which nourishes (vardhana) the cows (go).”  
from *Ten Appeals for Residence at Govardhana Hill* by Srila Raghunnatha dasa Goswami.



Urvasi devi dasi

Sunrise during the recent floods at New Govardhana. In the bottom left of the photograph you will notice the red flag atop the *Kadamba* tree next to the temple. (Looking west)



Gita Govinda devi dasi



Gita Govinda devi dasi

During the recent floods at New Govardhana Gita Govinda devi dasi (GG) found herself “stranded” at her home. Not only were the flood waters raging nearby and washing away the access road, but her sprained ankle also managed to “keep this good woman down” ... but “not out”. During this time GG spent her days making transcendental mosaics for her home. In the picture to the left you can see the beginnings of an image of Krishna with one of His cows. In the picture on the right, one can see a finished mosaic cow on the wall of GG’s home. Besides these works, she has made Krishna conscious leadlight windows for the home she built herself, spins her own wool and yarn from which she creates unique clothing, as well as making paper and soaps, besides her work with the cows, bullocks and horses. If you would like to learn any of these arts and crafts please contact Gita via [newgovconch@gmail.com](mailto:newgovconch@gmail.com)



Urvasi devi dasi

Keira helped with setting up the event by doing this painting on the windows at the New Govardhana temple.

Recently Prahlada (Lardi) Benson and his family organised an event centred around raising awareness of the ongoing campaign to stop the desecration of the sacred Yamuna River in India. The evening began with kirtana and a short film about the river. A feast was served after the Gaura Arati and this was followed with more kirtana late into the night. We would like to thank Lardi for coming forward to organise this event.



Urvasi devi dasi

Lardi Benson serves out the feast cooked by his father Dhanesvara dasa, mother Karunika devi dasi, sister Lali and helpers.

## DEVOTEE SKILLS REGISTER READY TO TAKE OFF



*Vaisnavi devi dasi*

*By Padma devi dasi*

In the November 2012 issue of The Conch, we published an article about an upcoming data-base. It will contain listings of the skills, talents, tertiary and professional qualifications and work experiences and service desires of our community members. This data-base is now ready to take off, with Vaisnavi devi dasi acting as the data-base co-ordinator. Vaisnavi has recently moved to New Govardhana from New

Zealand and we are very happy that she is offering her skills in managing our Devotee Skills Register (DSR).

We are excited about DSR because it will allow all members, within our broader devotee community. To have easy access to whatever human resources we possess, means that devotees can save much time and effort in finding specialised help for different types of devotional services. Devotees can also use DSR to seek help for their own personal projects. The more devotees that submit their details to DSR, the more resources we will be able to make accessible for us to further develop our community. Any skill, talent, ability, qualification or burning desire can be submitted to DSR.

Details of how the DSR will operate and how to submit your personal details will soon be made available. All glories to Sri Sri Radha-Govardhanadhari and Their devotee community!



*Sri Sri Krishna Balarama and Lord Giriraja at New Govardhana*

## THE ADVENTURE OF FINDING A WIFE ...

*by Govardhana Seva dasa*

Many devotees will be aware of Syamsundara dasa, his wife Rita, son Ricky and daughter Puja who come to New Govardhana three or four times a week to perform various services. This includes organising, and participating in, the serving of *prasadam* at the Sunday feasts; cleaning the brass and other items in the paraphernalia areas of the Temple, and helping with the cooking.

Recently they left Australia for the State of Punjab in India to follow the age-old Hindu Vedic custom of finding a suitable wife for Ricky. This involved a lot of preparation including the compiling of a Vedic astrological chart and making contact with suitable cultural families.

By Vedic tradition the intending couple are allowed to meet once before the wedding. Ricky met Radhika on the 27 February and, with both in agreement, the wedding took place on the 7 March 2013. This differs a little from the original procedures, where the intending bride and groom had no input.

The preparation of the actual wedding took several days and the celebration, including a three hour fire *yagna* ceremony, lasted for over three days, and was attended by over 350 happy relatives and friends. After so much planning and preparation, Ricky and Radhika were happy to be man and wife.

Now there is the very complicated and time consuming application for an Australian visa, which could take several months.

May Ricky and Radhika have all the best in their married life, with Krishna Consciousness in the centre.



*Ricky and Radhika are shown wearing the traditional Vedic wedding outfits. Ricky's outfit consists of a turban, sherwani (coat and trousers), while Radhika is dressed in the traditional wedding sari and chura (bridal bangles)*

# SADHU-SANGA, SADHU-SANGA - SARVA-SASTRE KAYA !

by Damodara Pandit dasa

*“The verdict of all revealed scriptures is that by even a moment’s association with a pure devotee, one can attain all success.”*  
(Sri Caitanya Caritamṛta Madhya 22.54)

“In the Padma Purana, there is a nice statement praising the service of the *Vaisnavas*, or devotees. In that scripture Lord Siva tells Parvati, “My dear Parvati, there are different methods of worship, and out of all such methods the worship of the Supreme Person is considered to be the highest. But even higher than the worship of the Lord is the worship of the Lord’s devotees.”

A similar statement is in the Third Canto, Seventh Chapter, verse 19, of Srimad-Bhagavatam, “Let me become a sincere servant of the devotees, because by serving them one can achieve unalloyed devotional service unto the lotus feet of the Lord. The service of devotees diminishes all miserable material conditions and develops within one a deep devotional love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

In the Skanda Purana there is a similar statement, “Persons whose bodies are marked with *tilaka*, symbolizing the conchshell, wheel, club and lotus -- and who keep the leaves of *tulasi* on their heads, and whose bodies are always decorated

with *gopi-candana* -- even seen once, can help the seer be relieved from all sinful activities.”

A similar statement is found in the First Canto, Nineteenth Chapter, verse 33, of Srimad-Bhagavatam, “There is no doubt about one’s becoming freed from all reactions to sinful activities after visiting a devotee, or touching his lotus feet, or giving him a sitting place. Even by remembering the activities of such a *Vaisnava*, one becomes purified, along with one’s whole family. And what, then, can be said of rendering direct service to him?”

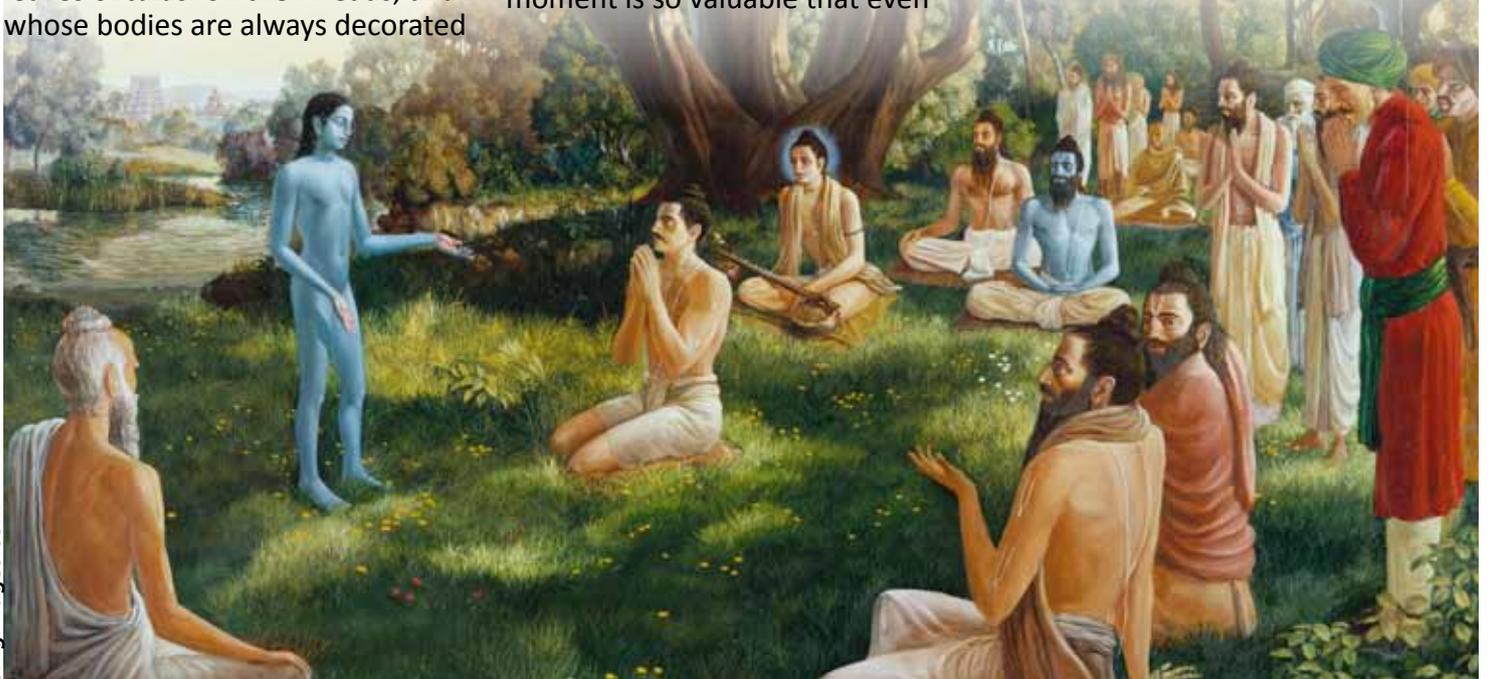
In the Adi Purana there is the following statement by Lord Krishna Himself, addressed to Arjuna, “My dear Partha, one who claims to be My devotee is not so. Only a person who claims to be the devotee of My devotee is actually My devotee.” No one can approach the Supreme Personality of Godhead directly. One must approach Him through His pure devotees.

“The importance of discussing Srimad-Bhagavatam in the society of pure devotees was explained by Saunaka Muni during the meeting at Naimisaranya, in the presence of Suta Gosvami. Suta Gosvami confirmed that if someone is fortunate enough to associate with a pure devotee of the Lord even for a moment, that particular moment is so valuable that even

those pious activities which can promote one to the heavenly planets or give liberation from material miseries cannot compare to it. In other words, those who are attached to Srimad-Bhagavatam do not care for any kind of benefit derived from elevation to the higher planetary kingdoms, or for the liberation which is conceived of by the impersonalists. As such, the association of pure devotees is so transcendently valuable that no kind of material happiness can compare to it.

In the Hari-bhakti-sudhodaya there is a conversation between Prahlada Maharaja and his father, Hiranyakasipu, in which Hiranyakasipu addresses Prahlada in this way, “My dear son, association is very important. It acts just like a crystal stone, which will reflect anything which is put before it.” Similarly, if we associate with the flower-like devotees of the Lord, and if our hearts are crystal clear, then certainly the same action will be there. Another example given in this connection is that if a man is potent and if a woman is not diseased, then by their conjugation there will be conception. In the same way, if the recipient of spiritual knowledge and the deliverer of spiritual knowledge are sincere and bona fide, there will be good results.”

*(Extracts from ‘Nectar of Devotion’. Ch 12)*



# FLOOD OF VAISNAVAS TO NEW GOVARDHANA

by Damodara Pandit dasa

Over the next six weeks we will have a flood of senior *Vaisnavas* visiting New Govardhana. We should be ready to appreciate and serve all *Vaisnavas*, and in this way we can benefit from their association.

Here are some practical ways to serve the *Vaisnavas* -

- Be present for their arrival. A welcome *kirtana* would be nice, followed by a foot bathing ceremony and a short reception
- Offer obeisances
- Make sure that a clean room is ready with bedding and bathing items
- Make sure all *prasadam* arrangements are made during the entire visit
- Offer personal service like cleaning the room, doing the laundry or arranging a massage
- Attend the lectures
- Request a personal *darshan*
- Offer a gift or donation
- Offer kind words expressing gratitude for their association



Urvasi devi dasi

**HH Mukunda Goswami speaks with Willing Workers on Organic Farms (WWOOFers) each Sunday at 9.30 am.**

## LETTER OF THANKS AND A REQUEST

Dear devotees of the Lord,

For the past month I have been managing the Deity roster, assisted by the very competent Lakshmi Priya devi dasi. I thank her very much for her surrender and devotion to Their Lordships.

This all-encompassing service can be quite daunting, due to the heavy responsibility of maintaining the regulated offerings every day.

How happy I am to report that everything ran very smoothly and the couple of odd glitches that arose were quickly and efficiently dealt with by our surrendered *pujaris*.

Everyone was supportive and went out of their way to assist me.

Special thanks to Mathuradisa dasa for his strong support and to those of you who went that extra mile to maintain the standard. You know who you are!

***I would also like to take this opportunity to make a special request. To all devotees, I would ask that, if possible, we consider the timing of our vacations and pilgrimages. How sensitive and caring it would be if we tried to stagger them, thus assuring that sufficient people remain back at the temple at any one time.***

Thank you all very, very much.

Your aspiring servant,  
Mandakini devi dasi

## EDITORIAL GUIDELINES

Articles submitted to the Conch must contain 200 words or less and must 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](mailto:newgovconch@gmail.com) between the 1st and 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.

Urvasi devi dasi



## 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](http://www.theconchnewsletter.org)

**Isaac from Chile trains one of New Govardhana's four-year-old bullocks named Rasa. This photo shows the first time Rasa was led with rope and voice commands. He did very well according to Isaac.**

# UPCOMING EVENTS ...

## VAISNAVAS VISITING NEW GOVARDHANA

RAMA NAVAMI  
20 APRIL



HH Hanumat Presaka Swami



HH Bhanu Swami



Over the next six weeks we will have many senior *Vaisnavas* visiting New Govardhana.

If you would like more information about these classes and seminars please contact Damodara Pandit dasa 0415 190 313 or go to [www.krishnafarm.com](http://www.krishnafarm.com) for the most up-to-date information.

## 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**

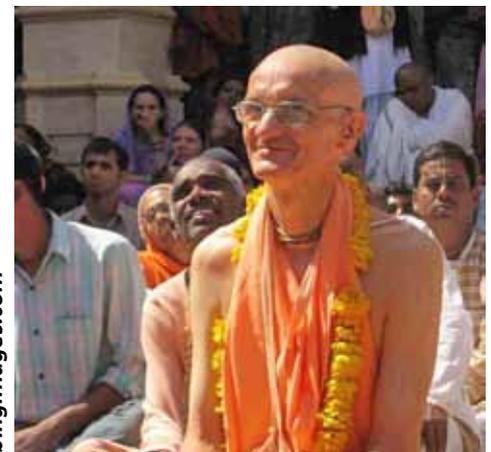
Bhakti Centre Surfers Paradise  
[bhakticentregoldcoast.com.au](http://bhakticentregoldcoast.com.au)

**Sunday Mornings**

Northern NSW & Gold Coast  
[folkkrishna.com/program.htm](http://folkkrishna.com/program.htm)  
Isvara dasa 0411 825 549

- **HH Hanumat Presaka Swami**  
26 - 29 March  
"Light of *Bhagavata*"
- **HH Bhanu Swami**  
6 - 8 April  
"Hari Nama Chintamani"
- **HG Suresvara Prabhu**  
13 - 16 April  
"Founder *Acharya*"
- **HH Janananda Swami**  
19 - 24 April  
TBA
- **HG Jaya Sila dasa & HG Vimala devi dasi**  
2 - 5 May  
"Nurturing the Child"
- **Devamrita Swami**  
12 - 15 May  
TBA

Fast till sunset. The festival will begin with Srimad Bhagavatam class and the morning program. Then by mid-afternoon there will be *bhajans*, *arati*, school play, readings of the pastimes of Lord Ramachandra, *abhisheka* bathing ceremony of Sita Rama, evening *arati* and a feast. Watch for more details at [www.krishnafarm.com](http://www.krishnafarm.com)



HH Janananda Swami

## APRIL CALENDAR

(extracted from the online Vaisnava calendar [www.vaisnavacalendar.com](http://www.vaisnavacalendar.com))

- 3 We Sri Srivasa Pandita — Appearance
- 6 Sa Fasting for Papamocani Ekadasi  
Last day of Daylight Saving Time
- 7 Su Dvadasi Break fast 5.59 am - 9.52 am  
Sri Govinda Ghosh — Disappearance
- 14 Su Tulasi Jala Dan begins
- 15 Mo Sri Ramanujacarya — Appearance
- 20 Sa Rama Navami: Appearance of Lord Sri Ramacandra (Fast till sunset)
- 22 Mo Fasting for Kamada Ekadasi
- 23 Tu Dvadasi Break fast 6:08 am - 9.52 am
- 26 Fr Sri Balarama Rasayatra

# KOFTAS KEEP 'EM ROCKIN'

by Mandakini devi dasi (based on an interview with Krishna Gan dasa)

Krishna Gan dasa, Trayodisa dasa and visiting devotee Aisvarya dasa, left New Govardhana on 28 February to make the 2,100 km trek to Adelaide, South Australia.

Besieged by constant rain and swollen rivers, our intrepid catering crew pushed on relentlessly to complete the trip in just two days.

Their effort was well worthwhile, as the two music festivals, Womadelaide and Soundwave proved to be resoundingly successful.

“People remembered us and were very happy to see us,” reports Krishna Gan, “It looks like everyone is turning into a *kofta* ball junkie. The *koftas* are definitely taking over from *gulabjamuns* as the new ISKCON bullets.”

Mostly finishing their service round about midnight, our tired but satisfied crew subsist on a minimal amount of sleep. Fortunately, they were able to enlist the assistance of the Adelaide devotees who helped serve the never-ending lines of *prasadam* lovers.

Upon leaving South Australia the crew made the two day journey to The Blue Mountains Music Festival, where they spent three days catering to the hungry masses before heading for home.

Krishna Gan estimates that up to 5,000 plates of *prasadam* have been relished by festival goers.



Womadelaide Festival in South Australia  
(Photograph by Krishna Gan dasa)

## SHORT TERM ACCOMMODATION AT NEW GOVARDHANA

by Govardhana Seva dasa

Have you ever considered spending a day or two enjoying the peace and tranquillity of the New Govardhana farm? Most of the accommodation at the farm is situated quite close to the Temple, in a quiet, peaceful atmosphere with views of the surrounding countryside.

The accommodation is varied and caters for the needs of most people. There are some self-contained cabins, with their own bathroom facilities, which can cater for up to five people. There are also simple rooms with shared bathroom facilities. Bedding is provided in all cabins. There are no cooking facilities because all meals are provided at the Temple *prasadam* area and are included in the booking price. The meals are pure vegetarian.

No meat, fish or alcohol is allowed on the Farm. No animals are allowed.

Booking your accommodation in advance is strongly advised, particularly during holiday times, festivals, retreats or courses.

### Prices

Self-contained cabins (up to five people)

\*from \$90 per night

Rooms with shared bathroom facilities

\*from \$40 per night

\*Prices will vary according to the number of people in the cabin.



### Booking and accommodation

All bookings and other accommodation enquiries should be made to the following address:

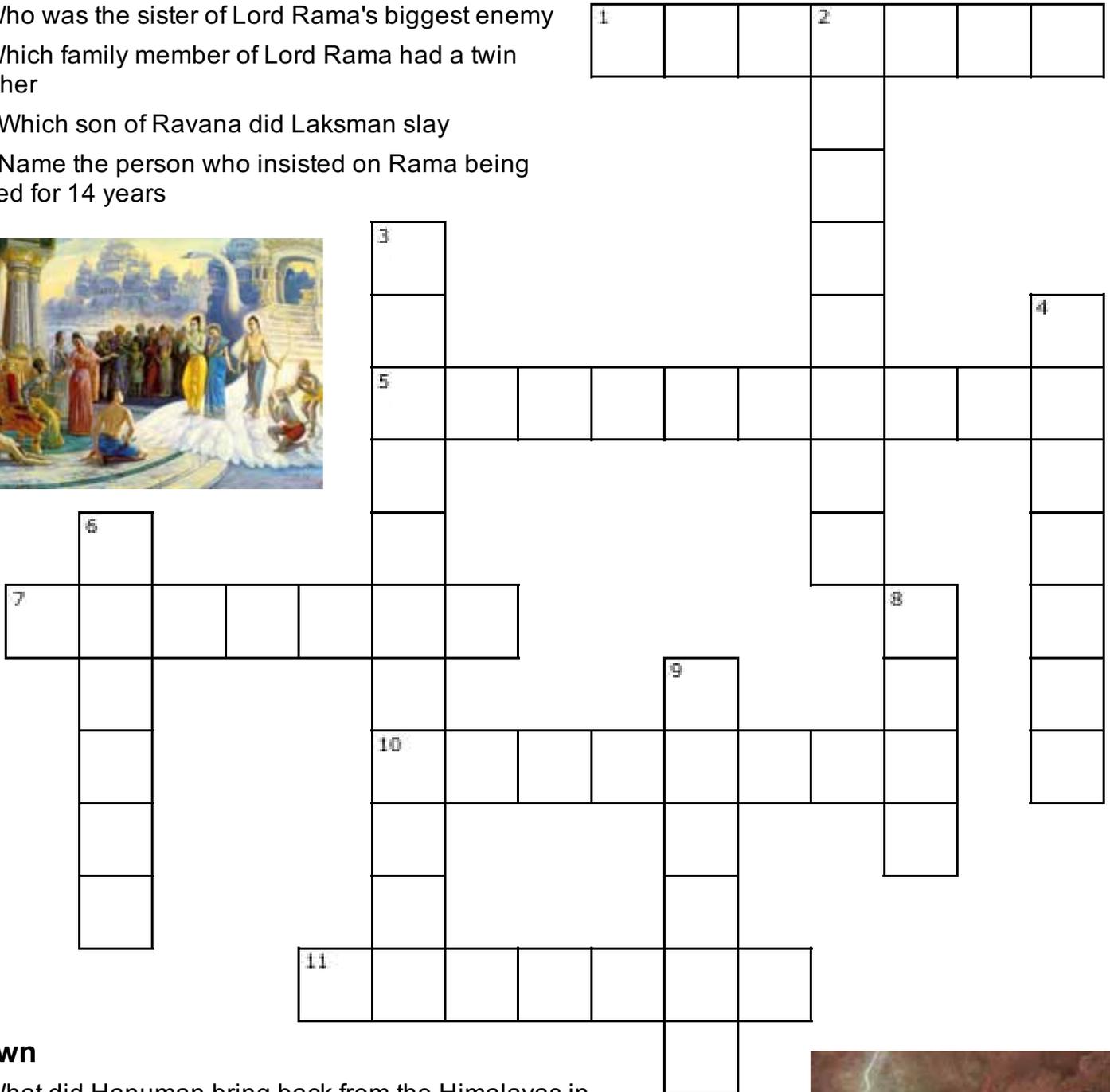
[guesthouse108@gmail.com](mailto:guesthouse108@gmail.com)



## LORD RAMA CROSSWORD

### Across

1. In which ashram did Sita educate her twin sons
5. Who was the sister of Lord Rama's biggest enemy
7. Which family member of Lord Rama had a twin brother
10. Which son of Ravana did Laksman slay
11. Name the person who insisted on Rama being exiled for 14 years



### Down

2. What did Hanuman bring back from the Himalayas in an effort to save Laksman
3. Which sage asked Rama and Laksman to slay some demons that were harassing him and other sages
4. Who let Rama's twin sons catch him and tie him up
6. Which army help Lord Rama
8. What is the name of Lord Rama's wife
9. Name the eagle who gave information of Sita's kidnap

