

American Hindu Association

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HINDU CONNECTIONS

July, 2008

Sri Krishna Jayanthi / Sri Krishna Janmashtami

Date: August 23, 2008 Time: 5pm- 8pm

Venue: Shorewood Community Center

901 Swarthmore Court, Madison, WI 53705



You are cordially invited to a special program organized by the American Hindu Association on the occasion of Krishna Janmastami. Lord Krishna is the manifestation of Supreme God who came down to the material world showing the path to eternal world. Please join us to celebrate this auspicious day of his birth. Siddheshvari Deviji, a well-known speaker on Hinduism will be giving a lecture. Siddheshvari Deviji is a great presenter. Do not miss this opportunity to listen to her. Program will start with Puja followed by Special speech and Melodious Bhajans by Didiji, concluded with a Potluck Dinner. Please bring a dish, your choice of food, to share with others. For more information: www.americanhindu.net

AHA Goes Environmentally Friendly

American Hindu Association is collecting empty printer cartridges of HP, Dell and used cell phones. AHA incorporates Recycle program to enhance the fundraising by used inkjet and laser printer cartridges as well as used cell phones. Benefits to you or your company:

- Environmentally friendly disposal of printer cartridges and cell phones
- Community recognition for recycling efforts
- Continual support to American Hindu Association without extra cash donations
- Enables members to dispose of cartridges and cell phones from personal use

The program gives you to drop off all the inkjet and laser printer cartridges as well as used cell phones at - **INDIA HOUSE 805-B, S. Gammon Rd, Madison, WI BOMBAY BAZAAR 753 S. Gammon Rd, Madison, WI** Please consider collecting used cell phones and empty printer cartridges within your Home/ Company to benefit American Hindu Association. If you have any questions about this program, please contact AHA - at AHA@americanhindu.net or 608-234-8634.

Hindus Divided On "The Love Guru" Movie

http://religionnews.com/index.php?rnsblog/no_love_for_the_love_guru/
USA, July 20, 2008: The latest character to test the good humor of Indian Americans is Mike Myers' "The Love Guru," a narcissistic spiritual leader whose goals in life are to meet girls and appear on "Oprah." The film opened Friday (June 20) in theaters nationwide.

Enough is enough, some Hindu activists claim. For them, lampooning a guru crosses the line from acceptable social satire to mockery of a minority religious culture little understood by Americans. Some Hindu groups have asked Paramount Pictures for an apology and other initiatives. Rajan Zed, a Hindu chaplain from Nevada and a vocal protester, said "the problem is that cinema is a powerful medium, and people who are not well-versed in Hinduism get misinformed."

But opinions differ inside the Hindu community. The Washington-based Hindu American Foundation had taken a wait-and-see approach and after a screening in Minneapolis on Thursday, board members found it "vulgar, crude ... and tasteless" but nonetheless few screeners thought it "anti-Hindu or mean-spirited." Vijaya Emani, former president of the Federation of India Community Associations in Ohio, had plain-spoken advice to Hindu protesters after seeing the film: "Lighten up."

In the movie, Myers portrays the Indian-trained "Guru Pitka," who oversees a self-help empire built on books such as "If You're Happy and You Know It, Think Again." Much of the humor seems to be aimed at 8-year-olds, with scores of attempts to elicit laughs based on bodily functions. Most reviews have been unfavorable, and the New York Times called the movie "unfunny."

Deepak Sarma, an associate professor of religious studies at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, expressed concern that the film could fuel "a kind of jingoistic Americanism" that makes fun of those who are different. "The amount of damage for the understanding of Hinduism in America will be tremendous," said Sarma, editor of "Hinduism: A Reader."

Virginia Lam, a spokeswoman for Paramount said the new film is in the same spirit as Myers' Austin Powers films. "No one could confuse, or has confused, this film as intending to tackle serious issues surrounding faith and religion — just as no one confused Austin Powers as being a commentary on globalism and trans-Atlantic relations," Lam said in a statement. While some advocate a boycott, others see the controversy as an opportunity to better explain Hinduism to an attentive media. "Sometimes, it takes perceived

provocations such as this address topics such Hinduism in front of a larger audience,” said Brent Plate, an associate professor of religion and the visual arts at Texas Christian University. “In a strange way, they get us talking about these issues.”

Save the Dates – Upcoming Events

AHA Annual Picnic ~ July 19, 2008 ~ 11:00AM – 4.00PM
Burrows Park, 25 Burrows Rd Madison WI 53704

Sri Krishna Janmashtami~August 23, 2008 ~ 5pm- 8pm
Shorewood Community Center
901 Swarthmore Court, Madison, WI 53705

Daily Inspiration

I submit to you that the tolerant society is open to and encouraging of all religions. And this does not weaken us; it strengthens us, it makes us strong. You know, if we look back through history to all those great civilizations, those great nations that rose up to even world dominance and then deteriorated, declined and fell, we find they all had one thing in common. One of the significant forerunners of their fall was their turning away from their God or Gods.

Ronald Reagan (1911-2004), 40th President of the USA

GEMS FROM THE BHAGVAD GEETA

This is a series of extracts from the Sri Bhagavada Geeta (The Divine Song). The Bhagavada Geeta is said to be the essence of all the Vedas and Upanishads. It's teachings are as relevant today as they were when the Lord, Sri Krishna, expounded to prince Arjuna on the sacred battle field of Kurukshetra thousands of years ago. While it is impossible to do justice to a profound work such as this in a newsletter, in each edition we present a few randomly chosen set of couplets and their brief meaning. We hope it enriches your life and helps you find a balance between your material and spiritual journey.

Ch5: Couplet # 1 **arjuna uvaca**

sannyasam karmanam Krsna punar yogam ca samsasi
yac chreya etayor ekam tan me bruhi su-niscitam

Arjuna asks:

O Krishna, You praise abandoning of actions and then your praise performing of actions for purifying mind. Tell me which one of these two is more beneficial for me?

Ch5: Couplet # 2 **sri-bhagavan uvaca**

sannyasah karma-yogas ca nihsreyasa-karav ubhau
tayos tu karma-sannyasat karma-yogo visisyate

Lord Krishna replies:

The abandonment of actions (and knowledge) and actions performed for purifying mind are both good for liberation. But, out of these two, actions performed for purifying mind are better than the abandonment of actions.

Ch5: Couplet # 3 **jneyah sa nitya-sannyasi yo na dvesti na kanksati** **nirdvandvo hi maha-baho sukham bandhat pramucyate**

One who, while working for the welfare of others, and performing his duties, neither hates nor desires the fruits of his activities is known to be always renounced. Free from all dualities, he is liberated easily from bondage, O Mighty Armed Arjuna

Ch5: Couplet # 4

sankhya-yogau prithag balah pravadanti na panditah
ekam apy asthitah samyag ubhayor vindate phalam

The ignorant person considers naturalism and actions performed for purifying mind as different. Wise men do not consider them different but consider them one. He, who is stable in any one of these two, achieves the results of both.

Ch5: Couplet # 5

yat sankhyaih prapyate sthanam tad yogair api
gamyate

ekam sankhyam ca yogam ca yah pasyati sa pasyatei
The absolute state (paradise) that a Sankhayogi (naturalist) attains is also attained by the Karmayogi (religious performers for purifying soul). There is no difference in their end results. Therefore, he who sees naturalism and disinterested actions performed for purifying mind as different entity is the only one who perceives reality.

Ch5: Couplet # 6

sannyasas tu maha-baho duhkham aptum ayogatah
yoga-yukto munir brahmana cirenadhigacchati

O Mighty Armed (Arjuna)! Without Karmayog (religious performances), it is difficult to abandon the fruits of action and to attain rationalism. But the sage who is engaged in devotional service and religious performances quickly attains the Absolute.

Ch5: Couplet # 7

yoga-yukto vishuddhatma vijitatma jitendriyah
sarva-bhutatma-bhutatma kurvann api na lipyate

The Karmayogi (Disciple of God) who is inclined in Karmayog, whose mind is pure, who has controlled his body, who has subdued his senses and who regards others beings as the same as himself, is not tainted by actions even doing them.

Ch5: Couplet # 8 & 9

naiva kincit karomiti yukto manyeta tattva-vit
pasyan shrinvan sprsan jighrann asnan gacchan
svapan svasan

pralapan visrjan grhnann unmisan nimisann api
indriyanindriyarthesu vartanta iti dharayan

A performer of religious activities, who knows the truth, philosopher, seeing, listening, touching, smelling, eating, walking, sleeping, breathing, talking, emitting, grasping, opening and closing eyes, never thinks that he is doing anything. He believes that all kinds of actions are done by the laws of nature and as an arrangement by God.

Ch5: Couplet # 10

brahmany adhaya karmani sangam tyaktva karoti yah
lipyate na sa papena padma-patram ivambhasa

The person with pure thoughts, who performs actions, surrender to the God, and abandoning the fruits of the action, remains sinless (and pure) from sinful action, as the lotus leaf remains untouched by water.

Ch5: Couplet # 11

*kayena manasa buddhya kevalair indriyair api
yoginah karma kurvanti sangam tyaktvatma-shuddhaye*

The yogis, having abandoned attachment, act only with body, mind, intelligence and the senses, for the purpose of purification of the self.

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