



Baandhavya ಬಾಂಧವ್ಯ

Veerashaiva Samaja of North America

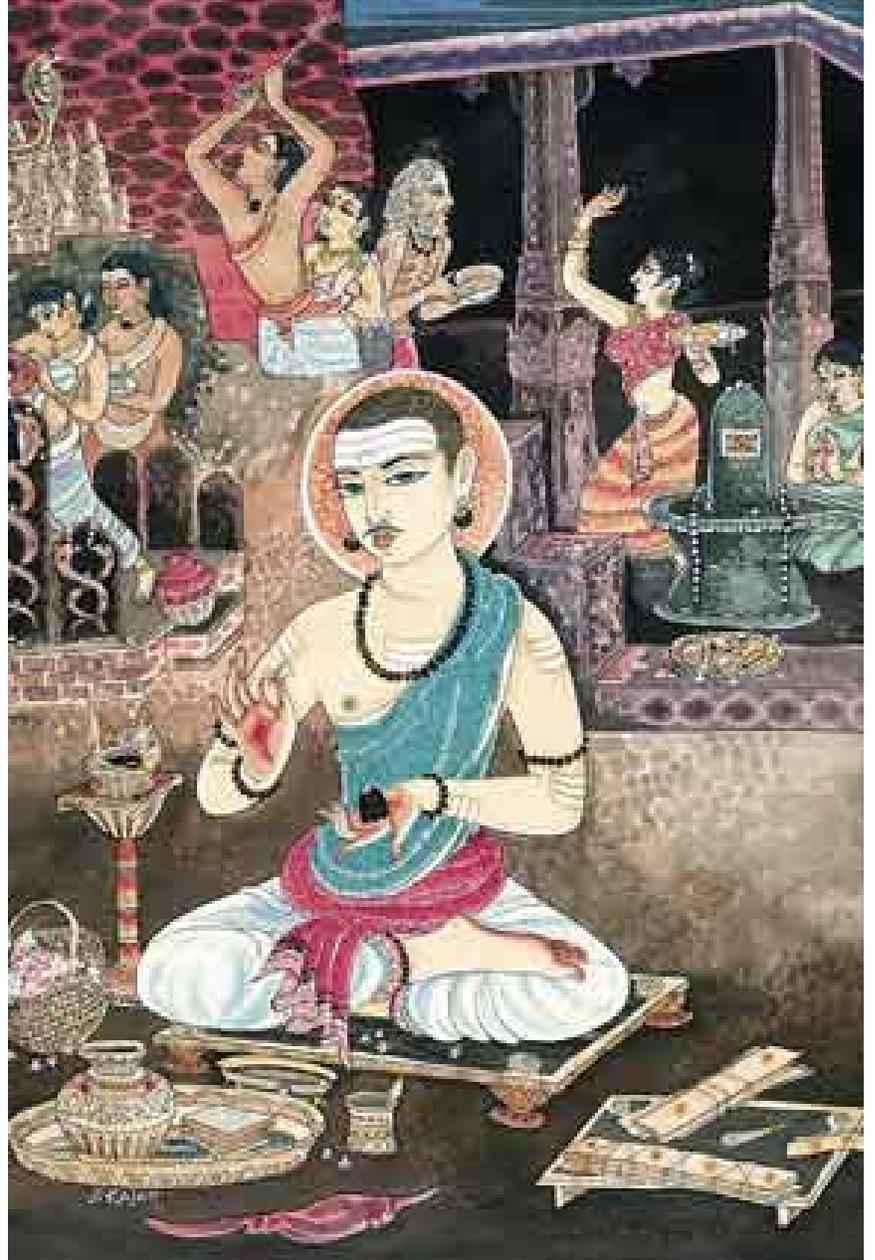
Summer 2010

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Editors:

Chaitra Kishore
Kusuma Aralere
Shankar Sagare



Editors' Note

Dear VSNA Members:

Hope you all had good spring and ready to enjoy the summer. First we would like to know how many of you noticed the change in the spelling of our newsletter's name "Baandhavya". We would like to thank His Holiness Dr.Shivamurthy Swamiji, Sirigere for taking time to review our newsletter and telling us about the mistake we were making in the spelling and helping us to spell it correctly.

Thanks to Shankar Sagare of Maryland for joining the editorial committee of Baandhavya and we welcome him. Thank you also to everyone who gave us your compliments and feedback on the spring edition.

This edition is full of news, chapter updates and articles on various topics.

Thanks to all the writers who sent in their articles for this edition. The views expressed in these articles solely belong to the authors and are independent from the opinions of the executive committee and the editorial committee.

If you would like to send us the articles for future editions here are the format requirements:

- Articles can be English (MS Word or Rich Text - Arial font size 11) or Kannada (Baraha font); and the length of an article to be no more than 2 pages.
- Send your articles and suggestions to vsnanewsletter@yahoo.com.

As always, we would love to hear from you - any news to share, comments, thoughts or suggestions.

Thank you,

Editorial Committee

President's Note



Veerashaiva Samaja of North America



ದಯವಿಲ್ಲದ ಧರ್ಮವದಾವುದಯ್ಯಾ ?
ದಯವೇ ಬೇಕು ಸಕಲ ಪ್ರಾಣಿಗಳೆಲ್ಲರಲ್ಲಿ
ದಯವೇ ಧರ್ಮದ ಮೂಲವಯ್ಯಾ
ಕೂಡಲಸಂಗಯ್ಯನಂತಲ್ಲದೊಲ್ಲನಯ್ಯಾ.

Sharanu,

I am glad to note that the summer edition of VSNA Newsletter, Baandhavya, is being released on June 30, 2010. I sincerely appreciate Editors Kusuma Aralere, Chaitra Kishore, and Shankar Sagare for their creative and hard work in releasing this excellent Newsletter in a timely manner.

The goal of the Newsletter, Baandhavya, is to communicate with our community members the cultural and religious aspects of Veerashaivism especially in spreading the message of Sharanas and Basava philosophy which is applicable even in the modern life. VSNA encourage members to take this opportunity to write their experience in the newsletter. VSNA pleads youngsters to write articles to express their ideas and thoughts.

I request all members to read the Newsletter to understand and to practice Basava Philosophy by Sharanas. This will help us to recognize and teach the younger generation many wonderful ideas of Basavanna like "Work is Worship", Equality to all, and Dasoha, the community service.

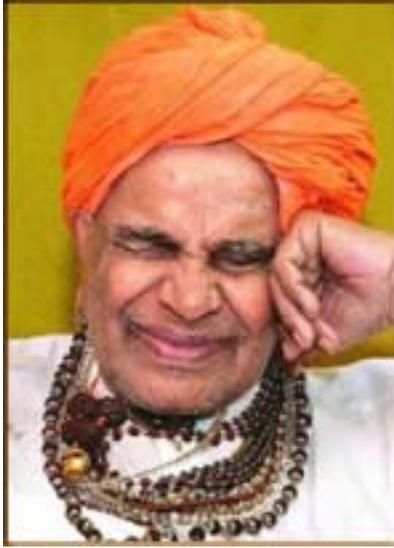
I invite all of you to attend our annual convention at Toronto, Canada to participate in the social, cultural, and religious activities at the convention and to become connected to each other. During the awards ceremony at the convention, Central VSNA will honor the distinguished people for outstanding achievements in their special fields. I will also announce the new Central VSNA officers for the next term and the new host chapter that has come forward to conduct the convention 2011.

Once again I request all of you to send your articles to the editors of the Newsletter for the next edition.

*Thank you
With Sharanarathi,
Dr.Nagabhushana Malakkla
President VSNA.*

Padma Bhushan Award to Dr. Pandit Puttaraj Gawai

-Compiled by Kusuma Aralere, VA



It is an honor and pride to publish the news of Padma Bhushan Award being bestowed upon Dr. Pandit Puttaraj Gawai by the government of India on January 26, 2010 for his dedicated service in the field of art. (You get to read an article published in one of the Indian newspapers at the end of this article.)

The Padma Bhushan award is India's highest civilian decoration and was established on January 2, 1954 by Dr. Rajendra Prasad, who was president of India at that time. It stands third in the hierarchy of civilian awards, after the Bharat Ratna and the Padma Vibhushan, but comes before the Padma Shri. It is awarded to recognize distinguished service of a high order to the nation, in any field.

Sri Puttaraj Gawai, a 97 year old saint, born on March 3, 1914 lost his eyesight at the age of six months. He started his music lessons from his uncle who was a student of Sri Panchakshari Gawai. His uncle took the young boy puttaraj to Sri Panchakshari Gawai and asked him to accept him as one of his disciples and teach him music. Under his guidance, Puttaraj not only gained mastery over Hindustani and Carnatic style of vocal music but also to play Harmonium, Violin, Tabla and Mridangam. He learnt Hindi, Kannada and Sanskrit languages and went on to publish literature in all these languages. He translated the "Basava Purana" into Hindi for which he won the Government of India's President's Award. Many more awards have been given to him from various organizations, Central and state Governments of India.

Sri Puttaraj Gawai took over the leadership of the institution – 'Sree Veereshwara Punyashrama, Gadag' in 1944. This school was established by his guru, Sri Ganayogi Panchakshara Gawai, master of Hindustani and Carnatic music, to provide free shelter, food and music instruction to hundreds of orphans of all religions. Most

of us who have been to Gadag for a visit or are a native of Gadag have been to the Veereshwara Punyashrama.

I visited this place in 1990 and was mesmerized by the environment. It is neither a huge mansion nor a college dorm facility for students to live, but just a hall. Every student has a space to keep their belongings and a place to sleep. As you enter the main hall which accommodates students, you get to hear music. It might be someone singing in one corner, or someone playing on Tabla in another corner. They are just enjoying whatever they are doing. They seem to be in a world of their own, paying no attention to the visitors or observers. I spoke to the manager before compiling this article and he mentioned currently there are 600 students at the ashram, including disabled students.

Many famous musicians of India were students of this school at one time and to name a few – Pandit Basavaraj Rajguru, Siddarama Jambaldinni, Sheshadri Gawai and many more.

Last year, Puttaraja Gawai chose a successor - Sri Kallayyajja- who is also visually challenged.

Let us congratulate him on this occasion and wish him and his students all the success.

The contact information of the ashram is as follows.

Shree Veereshwara Punyashrama
Panchakshara Nagara
GADAG -582101.
(Karnataka State)

Manager: Sri Basavaraj Hidkimath
Phone: 8372-238464
Cell: 9972620284

http://www.puttarajgavaiji.com/dr_Puttaraj_gawaiji.html

Article published in "The Hindu" online edition dated January 26, 2010.

Puttaraj Gawai dedicates Padma Bhushan to students

Staff Correspondent

He says he is happy that he got the award

Hubli: "Nanaga prashasti bandiddu bhala santosha ageti" (I feel very happy on being selected for the award) "It is an award to my visually impaired students and thousands of devotees" This is what the nonagenarian musician Pandit Puttaraj Gawai, who will be celebrating his 97th birthday on March 3, had to say after being informed that he had been conferred the Padma Bhushan.

Although he is unable to speak much because of his age, the musician thanked the Government for recognizing his service to the world of music.

Born in 1914, Puttaraj Gawai continued the tradition of his guru Sri Panchakshari Gawai who established Vireshwara Punyashrama to make the visually impaired, people with physical disabilities and the destitute self-reliant by teaching them music.

Pandit Puttaraj Gawai, who plays several instruments besides being a vocalist, used to teach music to students until recently. Now, because of his failing health, he has now stopped teaching music.

He heads a theatre company "Sri Kumareshwara Krupa Poshita Pandit Panchakshari Gawaiyavara Natya Sangh" which was established about five decades back to support scores of artistes of "company theatre".

Pandit Puttaraj Gawai has written "Basava Purana" in Hindi. Recognizing his achievement, he was honoured by the then President of India Dr. Babu Rajendra Prasad in the year 1961. He received honorary doctorate by Karnatak University in 1975. In 2007, the Madhya Pradesh Government presented him the "Kalidas Samman". The other awards that he has got include Karnataka Rajyotsava Award (1970), Kanaka Purandara Prashasti (1998), Nadoja Prashasti (1998), Kendra Sahitya Nataka Academy award (1999), Basavashri Award (2002).

Mind – a friend or a foe?

- Akka Rupaka, Basava Divine Center, Austin, TX

The mind is a crucial part of human beings. It is through the mind that one thinks and functions. It is also through the mind that the external world is experienced. Of all the faculties possessed by the humans, the mind is the most powerful and it is also the hardest to control. The mind is very fickle in nature and is responsible for the emotional roller coaster that one goes through in daily life. Ironically, it is this mind, when calm, that enables one to create wonderful things, discover amazing facts, and even reach the ultimate goal of divine union.

It is through this mind that people fall into the traps of the *Samsara*! In fact, the *Samsara* manifests as the turbulences of mind resulting from the interactions with the external world. This mind can be a foe, weighing down with the miseries of *Samsara*, and it can also be a friend freeing and leading people towards Divinity. This mind is indeed mysterious! How to make it a friend that can free one from the miseries of *Samsara*? Many Vachanas of Sharanas unfold the mysteries of mind, detailing its various aspects, intricate nature, and how to render it an ally in the journey towards Divinity. Let us look at couple of Vachanas to understand the role of mind.

***Mind is verily the snake, body the snake-carrying basket;
Mastery over the snake is an all-consuming affair!
When would it kill, I wonder!
When would it swallow, I wonder!
The very act of worshipping you day in & day out
is indeed the magical charm, O Lord Kudalasangama!***

In this Vachana, Guru Basavanna depicts the perils associated with the mind and the means of managing it. He uses the analogy of a snake charmer in India carrying live cobra in small baskets to drive home the point. The snake lies inert coiled-up in a closed basket. When the basket is opened, out rushes the cobra, hissing with his hood spread wide, ready to snap and bite. However, under the spell of the enchanting music of the charmer's pipe, the snake timidly sways to the melody and under the control of the charmer. The snake that is a killer becomes a means of earning bread!

Guru Basavanna compares the mind to the snake residing within the basket of the body. Natural tendency of the mind is to move from sense object to sense object dwelling in the material world. Even while sleeping, the mind is restless stealing thoughts from the memory and subconscious! This outward bend of the mind is ever absorbed in the activities never permitting the inward journey towards the God residing deep within.

When an aspirant starts the spiritual journey, it is the mind that creates the bottlenecks. When an aspirant tries to calm and concentrate the mind, out springs a hidden desire or suppressed emotion. Starting from a simple thought, the mind can weave long chains of thoughts completely distracting and disturbing the very process of calming the mind. The irony of this is no one can predict when a thought or emotion would spring and completely consume a person. Nor can one guarantee when a desire will popup and bite. There are many examples of great sages who have fallen into this trap. This churning of the mind is a kind of poison that prevents one from turning inwards to the pure source of bliss.

Guru Basavanna prescribes daily veneration of God as the only remedy for this poisonous snake. He further says that this is like the enchantment of a charmer's pipe that attracts and holds the mind spellbound swaying towards the divine bliss! He proclaims that this act is the only magic that can control the snake that is the mind. This will transform the poisonous snake that binds the being to *Samsara* to a tool that leads one to liberation.

Just as the charmer needs his pipe constantly to control the snake, aspirants need the worship of God every day. It is not sufficient to worship once and expect to enjoy the effect all the time.

This Vachana is an example of Guru Basavanna's keen observational and analytical skills. Guru Basavanna indeed is a psychologist of extraordinary caliber! As a keen observer of the subtleties of the mind, he gives practical advice and tools to harness the enormous power of inner faculties towards achieving the spiritual goal.

When a fickle mind is transformed into a focused mind, it can be a very powerful asset. Starting with the mind that is immersed in *Samsara*, Sharanas show how to achieve this transformation. This transformation is the process of *Sadhana* undertaken in the path given by Guru Basavanna. When the mind undergoes this transformation, it becomes very potent.

***An elephant is mammoth: can goad be deemed inconsequential? Indeed not!
A hill is massive: can chisel be deemed insignificant? Certainly not!
Pitch darkness is unfathomable: can lamp be deemed irrelevant? Indeed not!
Ignorance runs deep: can mind meditating on you be deemed inconsequential?
Never, O Lord Kudalasangamadeva, never!***

In the above Vachana, Guru Basavanna is showing how potent the little mind of a person can become. Using powerful examples he drives home the point that however enormous and colossal a task may seem, one can use the little tools at their disposal to accomplish the task.

When one thinks of a majestic elephant roaming in the forest, the image that appears is that of a powerful animal living at its will. It is the largest land animal with the capacity to uproot tall trees, stampede fields, and bulldoze anything in its way! This mighty beast seems to be completely independent and uncontrollable. Yet, humans have learnt to control and harness this power by using a miniscule tool at his disposal – the goad. This tiny instrument with its sharp edge is all that a *mahout* needs to control and command the mighty beast. Using the goad, man has turned this mighty power to work for him and even providing for the livelihood. Even though tiny in size, goad is definitely not inconsequential to the elephant that it controls.

When one thinks of the granite hills, rocks, and boulders, the image that is conjured is the hard and unyielding nature of the stone. Stone endures nature and weather over ages and seems completely unchangeable! They appear so solid and unbeatable that it seems to be a daunting task to shape them. Yet, humans have learnt to shape and use them for centuries by using a small tool at their disposal – the chisel. Using this tiny tool, man has tamed mighty boulders and built many monuments, buildings, and structures. Under an expert sculptor, the chisel converts the unyielding boulder into beautiful sculptures and works of art. The chisel is most certainly not insignificant compared to the huge boulder that it shapes.

When one thinks of the pitch darkness, the image that is presented is the gloom and obscurity resulting in blindness. For humans who are used to living in the material world with the constant stimuli and interaction through sense organs, this can be an unsettling experience. One can see no way of controlling and eliminating this obstruction. Yet, humans have learnt to dispel this darkness with a tiny tool at their disposal – the light. A tiny lamp burning in a room will dispel the engulfing darkness instantaneously! Man has mastered the darkness by using lights. A burning lamp emitting light is definitely not irrelevant to the darkness that it dispels.

The ignorance that stands between the Divine and an aspirant seems immense! The Divine light that is ever burning deep within each of us seems to be completely engulfed by this colossal ignorance. Imagine how massive this ignorance must be to hide the bright divine light that is right there within a person, yet he is completely oblivious to it! This ignorance not only hides the true nature, but it also has the capacity to distract, charm, and engage one in worldly activities. It seems powerful like an elephant, solid like a boulder, and blinding like the darkness. This ignorance is certainly immense!

An aspirant turning inwards seeking divine bliss becomes aware of this ignorance that causes one to forget one's own true nature. The thought of dispelling this ignorance can be very daunting. Guru Basavanna says that one needs to use the powerful inner faculties for this task. Human mind might seem incapable of accomplishing this task, yet this can control, shape, and expel the ignorance enabling the divine vision.

The mind is normally engaged in the external activities associating itself with the sense organs and memory. However, when this mind is disengaged from these activities and calmed through spiritual disciplines, mind can become the means through which divine bliss can be experienced. A mind that is meditating and contemplating on God is by no means trivial. A single pointed mind turned inwards can indeed be a powerful tool and is definitely not inconsequential!

We need to learn to harness the potential of our minds by treading the path given by Guru Basavanna.

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Project Samparka

-Shiva Maganahalli, Secretary, VSNA

Sharanu,

Samparka project is an important undertaking in providing multi-channel communication between VSNA and its members and also among its members in the future. As a part of project started in late 2009 by VSNA Secretary, it is now in its 2.0 release.

With the release of 1.0, we are able achieve

- a. Consolidated lists of local chapter members
- b. Direct access to each local chapter to update their own list (instead of email communication or central VSNA maintaining the list). Access control pushed to each local chapter.
- c. Access to all members lists to convention hosting chapter for that particular year
- d. Used cloud applications to eliminate any costs

These considerably reduced the time, effort and friction for and while updating or sharing the member lists among the chapters. Furthermore, we did

- e. New blog updates - More updated posts on the blog
- f. Created multiple yahoo groups (BOD, Officers, Finance, Election, etc) for communication among its members

And with release of 2.0, we put in place

- a. VSNA website updated with latest info (correct chapter links, link between blog and site, officers bio, etc.)
- b. Migrating and cleaning pages (There were 2 sets of different pages (pre-2007 and post-2007) with quite different UI and info.)
- c. Access to all published old and new Newsletters

In the coming months, project plans to cover

- a. Get VSNA main blog to look closer to VSNA - Currently they look very different and user experience needs to be improved
- b. Have consistent local chapter info on VSNA web site - Currently many chapters' pages have "to be updated" for 3 years! Few have their own info, etc.
- c. Build central VSNA channel to have regular communication through email
- d. Utilize social networking for its members

Samparka project will continue to expand as above and needs some help from its members and local chapters. I urge any member who is willing to spend some time and effort with background in web technology to contact any VSNA officer of me. We will work with local chapters to update their respective page contents.

The Importance of Three

- Shankar Sagare, Gaithersburg, MD



His Holiness Mahatapasvi Shri Kumarswamiji's Message

Always refrain from three things:

Self-praise, condemning others and finding flaws in others.

Do three things without fail:

Remember God, honour others and make effort to get rid of your own flaws.

Always keep three things under your control:

The mind, the organ of taste and libido

Always stay under the control of the following three:

God, Dharma and good conduct

Always be humble before the three:

Guru, mother and father

Always love the following three:

God, Dharma and your country

Always cherish the following three in your heart:

Compassion, forgiveness and victory

Expel three things from your heart:

Anger, hatred and jealousy

Never doubt three things:

Words of scriptures, words of Guru and inspiration welling from the pure mind

Always honor the following three:
The old, the wise and the poor

Always do three things wholeheartedly:
Chanting and singing of God's name, meditation on God and Sat-sang (holy company)

Look upon the following three moments as most sacred:
A moment of love, a moment of compassion and a moment of sympathy

Never insist that other people accept the following three:
Agreeing to your religion, your way of dressing, and your opinion

Never hate these three persons:
A sick one, a miserable one, and the one from the lower caste

Every day visit the following three places without fail:
A temple of God, a saint's hermitage and the place of your work

Never ridicule these three:
The handicapped, a widow/orphan and poor/unhappy persons/animals

Daily do three things without fail for the development of your mind:
Study scriptures, meditate and remember your own flaws

Practice the following three things every day for your own good:
Walk in fresh air, eat healthy and forsake unhealthy food.

Never be any of the three:
One who forgets good things done by others, a hypocrite and an atheist

Always strive to be the following three:
Humble, forthright and a theist

The contact information of the ashram is as follows.

His Holiness Mahatapsvi Shri Kumarswamiji's Tapovan,
Tapovan,
DHARWAD -580 003.
(Karnataka State)

For more information please visit – [\[http://www.shivayoga.net\]](http://www.shivayoga.net) [\[http://www.veerashaiva.info\]](http://www.veerashaiva.info)

God's Laws

- Vinay Hiremath Algonquin, IL

I am a patron of the sciences and mathematics, and, as such, I tend to analyze most things through a scientific mind set. A swift glance at the small lake near my house may prove to be trite, but, if one takes the time to appreciate its majesty, it is actually quite marvelous. On my morning jogs I quietly appreciate the perfect sinusoidal oscillations of its waves. The faded cricketing of the cicadas and the solitary quacking of the geese compliment the calm and steady lapping of the waves as they plop onto the grassy shore – equilibrium of simple harmonic motion. The vivid blue of the morning sky brilliantly juxtaposes with the calm, steely blue of the lake's water, which I know is the pleasant product of the projection of varying light frequencies. Nature is wonderful, and, for a time, I felt as though science and mathematics could answer all her mysteries. Experience and a deeper analysis of science have proven me wrong in this regard.

Observing the human race is amusing. Humans set up laws and regulations, restricting what another human can do, but they are never completely effective. People do not stop abusing drugs merely because another human tells them it is illegal. A red light cannot physically stop a human from running it. There are always ways to break these rules. There are always exceptions. On the other hand, it seems as though the laws of science and mathematics can never be broken. When you jump, you are dragged back to the ground because of gravity. You can propel yourself out of gravity's grasp, but only through the employment of other scientific laws. This ultimate consistency of science – its ubiquitous nature – is what made it difficult for me to surrender to the idea of a higher being. How could I believe anything was greater than science? That is why I remained an atheist until the day I, ironically, became aware that I did not understand science at all.

The intrinsic characteristic of science is that nothing is known and anything is possible. A famous physicist, Walter Lewin, confidently states that “measurement without knowledge of the uncertainty is *meaningless*”. Another prestigious physicist, Richard Feynman, claimed that “scientific laws are boring unless you figure out where they *don't* work”. You see, a scientific law was made a law by experimentation. At any point in time we can find the loophole to this law. There are always exceptions. Perhaps a scientific law is completely wrong, in which case it is revised and sent back down the hierarchy to remain a theory until sufficient experimentation makes it a law once again. For example, thousands of years ago human civilization was convinced that Earth was the center of the universe. Of course we know better now, but it was not so obvious back then. I'm sure you believe that drugs affect the mind solely due to their chemical nature. However, to this day, chemists cannot explain why people hallucinating on DMT in close proximity “share” the same exact hallucination. Phenomena such as these cannot be explained by science. Perhaps – like the motion of the planets – the answers to these anomalies will be obvious in the future, but it is important that one realizes that there is always uncertainty.

So, it was not until I realized that the ‘concrete’ laws of science are so easily broken, that I also became cognizant of the fact that a higher being – God – must exist. The first dimension is a point in space. In the second dimension this point is able to move back and forth on one line. We currently reside in the third dimension. The fourth dimension is time, and mathematicians and physicists are not completely in agreement of the geometrical significance of a fifth dimension. I believe the true question is: Which dimension does God reside in? For every set of laws there must be an enforcer.

Pilgrimage To Veerashaiva Holy Places

- Linga Raju, Plainview, NY

In the year 1997, Mr. M. B. Vishwanath, then resident of Chicago, and a past president of the Chicago VSNA chapter, wrote a letter to some of the fellow Veerasaivas and the VSNA, urging everyone to support the efforts to restore the Veerashaiva holy places – Basavanna Bagewadi, Basava Kalyana and Koodala Sangama. Since then I have been yearning to visit these holy places. This January 2010, I embarked on a pilgrimage and visited Kudala Sangama, Basava Kalyana, Srisaila, and Vijayanagar Empire Ruins at Hampi. Please note that part of what is written in this article is taken, word for word, from the Sunyasampadane, volumes I through V, published by Karnatak University, Dharwar, India.



Jyotirlinga at Kudala Sangama

Basavana Bagevadi (BB) and Kudala Sangama (KS): Basavanna/Basavesvara (B) was born (1131/1132 AD) at BB in the Bijapur district of Karnataka. Basavanna as a youngster revolted against the religious ceremonies, left his home along with his elder sister Nagambike, and came to KS. This holy place is located about 35 miles south-southwest of BB at the confluence of Krishna and Malaprabha Rivers. At KS, there was then a learned scholar Isanya Guru, under whom he studied the Vedas, Agamas, Sastras, and other religious literature. Basavanna's day to day worship of Lord Kudala Sangama, at the site, brought him peace of mind and spiritual fulfillment. He apparently had his Linga Diksha here at KS. Most of his adult life and his work were at Kalyana (now called Basava Kalyana). He returned to KS in 1167 AD after the revolution at Kalyana. He spent his final days here, and attained oneness with Lord Kudala Sangama. The Veerasaivas are very familiar with his vachana signature Kudala Sangama Deva.

Sangamanatha/Sangameshwara Temple complex is located here at KS. More importantly, the Basavesvara Aikya Mantapa and Jyotirlinga are here. Newer developments are a Gateway, Basavanna's statue in a worshipping position, Basava Dharma Peeta, Sabha Mandir (Auditorium), and Basava International Center – are of interest also. The site is fairly well developed for visitors. It is a vast area and not within any urban town. Accommodation is available – with air-conditioned and non-air-conditioned rooms, and a restaurant service.

Basava Kalyana (BK): This is the site of a great religious movement in the 12th century that led to the revitalization and reformation of the Saivas of the Hindu religion. It is the place where a new Hindu sect known as Veerasaivas or Lingayats was started. The great leader of this movement was Basavesvara. He was the Prime Minister of the king Bijjala who ruled a large territory that included parts of present day Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra States. Kalyana was its capitol. Basavanna was about 25 years of age when he started serving the kingdom, and he served for 12 years. His efforts were mostly oriented in two directions – religion and society – and perhaps towards a closer approximation of the two. He insisted upon the dignity and necessity of manual work; all work was equal in his eyes and in the eyes of God. The work was dedicated work (**Kayaka**) in the form of worship. Furthermore, surrendering all the fruits of one's labor for the welfare of humanity (**Dasoha**) was one of the essential tenets of his faith. The reforms were rooted in a profound **humility**. He was not the man to lay down the law in matters of religion and philosophy. Hence came the existence of the Anubhava Gosthi, popularly known as Anubhava Mantapa (AM) where a large number of scholars and seekers would gather to participate in learned discussions on the highest ends of life. They came from all parts of India.



Anubhava Mantapa at Basava Kalyan

Kalyana was both a symbol and an actual place where the AM became a spiritual academy. Allama Prabhu, popularly known as Prabhudeva (P), was the central character, or protagonist – its moving spirit. He was regarded as the most intellectual of all those scholars at the time. As he traveled all over India, he drew the scholars and the seekers towards Kalyana. The discourses were held in the Anubhava Mantapa. The main theme of these discussions was the Satsthala philosophy – the six stages a person has to ascend in one's pilgrimage to God. Prabhudeva presided over these deliberations. All these deliberations were documented in writing in the vachana form. The vachanas were used for propagating spiritual knowledge and the right way of life among the masses. Prabhudeva, the Jangama, after a long association with the saranas, goes on a tour in the southern part of India and then in the northern parts. He travels only to sanctify the land. He goes on sowing the seeds of devotion, knowledge and good deeds everywhere. He goes as far north as the Himalayas where in a large cave he meditates and enters into Real Trance. As in the Upanishadic saying "one who knows Brahman becomes Brahman", P becomes one with Sunya, but he does not die here.

Meanwhile at Kalyana, the saranas knowing that P would return, as he had promised, make arrangements for the construction of a Sunyasimhasana – Throne of the Absolute, for him. Basavanna erects a visible throne, a replica of the inner invisible one whereupon is seated the realizable Divinity, and awaits P's return. Prabhudeva returns to Kalyana in a disguised form, apparently to test B. Although many Jangamas gathered there, fail to recognize P, B recognizes him immediately and attends to him. Prabhudeva satisfied, ascends the throne and sits on the Sunyasimhasana. He consumes all the food there was and wants more. Only after B offers him his own bhakti-prasada, P is satisfied. It is only Infinite Love that can feed an Infinite God to satisfaction. Prabhudeva seems to have a clear vision of the shape of things. He is satisfied with B's mission of sowing the seeds of Sivabhakti, Sivadhyaana and Sivachara in the heart of everyone, and to divinize the whole of existence. He also sees that the end of the saranas is fast approaching. Satisfied himself about the spiritual attainment of the saranas, bids them to spend the last days of their lives in places dear to their heart. For himself, he chooses the plantain grove at Mount Srisaila. Bidding them goodbye, he leaves for Srisaila.

At Kalyana, the social reforms of Basava were resented by the orthodox Hindus, resulting in the disturbed conditions and B's resignation from the Prime Minister position. Basavanna's hurried departure to KS ensues, and the saranas disperse away from Kalyana for safety. As a consequence the vachana literature was scattered and some of it was probably lost.

Basava Kalyana is located in the northeastern corner part of Karnataka, close to the border with Maharashtra State. An assembly hall has been built where the Anubhava Mantapa supposedly was. Basavanna's standing portrait (with KS background) is mounted on a dais consisting of six semi-circular stages, decreasing in size from the base to the top, representing six stages of Satsthala. There does not seem to be a representation of Sunyasimhasana or Prabhudeva. In the BK town there is a Basaveswara temple complex. Basavanna's statue in the sitting (namaskara) position is at front, and in the inner sanctum, there is another one which seems to be gold-plated. Some original caves and the fort are at the outskirts of the town. There are no accommodations similar to the ones at KS, and it seems unattractive to visitors at this time.



Boat route to Akkamahadevi's cave in Srisaila

Srisaila is in the Andhra Pradesh State, about 250 miles southeast of BK. It is on the bank of the same Krishna River downstream from KS. The Linga at the Srisaila temple is known as Mallikarjuna Linga (also

Mallinatha Linga). The great Sivayogi Siddarama when he was a boy came there looking for Mallikarjuna in the form of a person, and was disappointed then to see only a Linga installed there. Siddarama sets up 64 Lingas at Sonnalige, now Sholapur, a district headquarters in the Maharashtra State, and constructs temples, water tanks, alms-sheds, etc. As he was engaged in this work, Prabhudeva comes there, convinces him that there is more to it than just building temples and such, and brings him down to Kalyana. Siddarama's vachana signature is Kapilasidda Mallikarjuna (and Kapilasidda Mallinatha).



Towards Akkamahadevi's cave in Srisaila

Mahadeviakka, popularly known as Akka Mahadevi was born at Udatadi in the Shimoga district of Karnataka State. She finds the idea of having God as a lover appealing. This idea becomes firm and intense as she grows older. She renounces the world, leaves Udatadi, and comes to Kalyana to seek spiritual union with the Lord Cennamallikarjuna. At Kalyana, Prabhudeva puts her to a severe test. Akka, after argument and counter-argument, convinces P that she has given herself away to Cennamallikarjuna, and is worthy of attaining union with the Supreme. She asks P to tell her the place, time and circumstances of her consubstantial union with Linga. He complies and sends her to Srisaila. The plantain grove near the Srisaila Mountain was a dreadful and a dangerous place. It was practically an impossible adventure to cross this grove and come to the temple of Srisaila Mallikarjuna. Hence the grove here is symbolic of the field of one's life's activities. One has to cut a path for oneself to life's ultimate goal. Mahadeviakka, guided by P, makes her way to Mount Srisaila and attains her union with Cennamallikarjuna there. Her vachana signature is Cennamallikarjuna.

Prabhudeva, after bidding farewell to Basavanna and all the saranas at Kalyana, proceeds to Srisaila. He goes beyond the temple of Mallikarjuna, to the cave in the plantain grove situated in the mountain gorges. He probably had been there before, as he had advised Mahadeviakka to go to the grove, when he was still at Kalyana. Here at the grove with serene sylvan atmosphere, the Light of his divine soul finds its ultimate resting-place.

A personal note – Srisaila Linga is our Manedevuru (house God, family God). The Srisaila Mallikarjuna Linga temple is run by the Veerasaivas. You are allowed to go all the way inside and touch the Linga yourself. The boat transport at the dammed Krishna River to go to Akka Mahadevi's place leaves only in the morning to allow enough time for the visit.

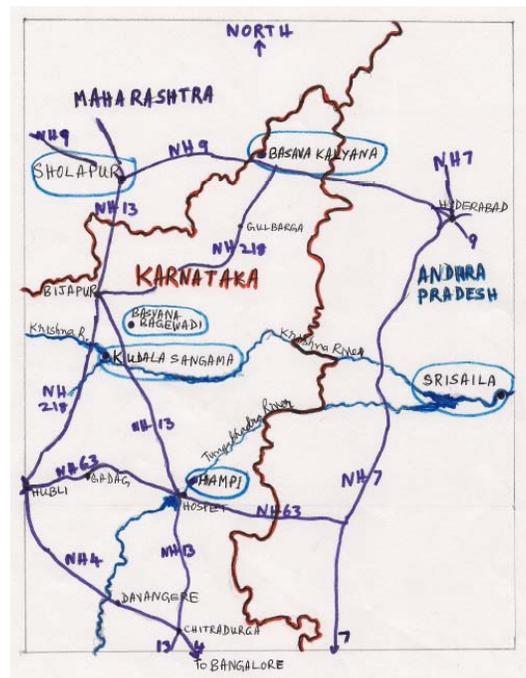
Vijayanagar Empire Ruins at Hampi: This Empire was founded in 1336 AD by Harihara of the Sangama dynasty. Vijayanagara the capital city was located on the bank of Tungabhadra River which is a tributary of the Krishna River. After the revolution in Kalyana in the 12th century, the saranas dispersed away for safety, and

the vachana literature was scattered. It was only in the reign of Proudha Devaraya (1417-1447 AD, Devaraya II of the Sangama dynasty) in the Vijayanagara Empire that the vachana literature was revived. It was systematically collected, although some of it is lost, and compiled into Sunyasampadane. It has more than 1,500 vachanas, and it occupies a very high place in the whole range of Indian literature. Vijayanagara was ravaged by invaders, leaving extensive ruins of the Empire, located at Hampi, near Hospet in Karnataka. The glory of Vijayanagar Empire seems to have faded away.



Vijayanagar Empire Ruins

I am very pleased indeed that I was able to fulfill my yearning by completing this pilgrimage. I intend to visit these places again sometime in the future. I urge all Veerasaivas to visit these holy places at least once in their lifetime. Hopefully the attached map will help in that regard.



Area Map of Veerashaiva Holy Places in Karanataka

Breaking Barriers

- Vimala Paranjyothi Chicago, IL



Vimala Paranjyothi pens down her thoughts as they occur to her on a subject close to her heart — freedom.

This poem is about freedom and is dedicated to all Indians. Freedom begins with the freedom of thought and has no ending. It is our duty to utilize most of the freedom in the best possible way and never to misuse it. If we lose freedom, frustration springs up; imaginary boundaries, which were hitherto absent, starts building in our minds, roots of limitations grow deeper in our minds, walls raise up and borders that limit our potential are drawn.

Freedom — I love to be free...
I wish to do what I like to do.
I live the way I like to live.
Every moment of life,
I wish to be free.

I dare to think beyond the obvious,
I strive to realize my dreams,
In every thought of mine,
I like to be free.

I am not tied by any region,
I am not bound by any religion.
I only know that I am a human,
Who loves to be free.

Untie my bonds,
Let me unleash my power
To realize my dreams.
Don't capture my peace
And curb my rights - set me free!
I fight to be free...

Freedom is the right of everyone,
I want to be free in every way,
I treasure my freedom everywhere;
I strive to be free...

Let me out of the boundaries,
Release me from the shackles of customs,
Unstrap me from the clutches of superstitions,
I love to be free...

ಬಾಳು...ಮಗು

ಬದುಕಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಎಡ ತಿರುವು
ಬಲ ತಿರುವು
ಬಾಳಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಮೊದಲು ಅರಿವು
ಅನಂತರ ಮರೆವು
ಪ್ರಕೃತಿಯ ಸೊಬಗು
ಸವಿದು ಹಾಡು ಮಗು
ಬಾಂಧವ್ಯದ ಸೊಗಸು
ಕಂಡು ಮುಂದೆ ಸಾಗು
ನಿನ್ನ ಮನದಲ್ಲಿ ನೆನೆದಂತೆ
ಬಾಳಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಸೋಲು-ಗೆಲುವು.....

-ವಿಮಲ ಪರಂಜ್ಯೋತಿ

The Great Gracious Guru Shri Shivayogi

- Compiled by Shankar Sagare, Gaithersburg, MD



Sri Murugendra Mahashivayogi – Athani

Lives of saints are the springs of eternal life. They are liberated while living. Shri Shivayogi enhanced the spiritual heights of mankind and brought the world with the nearer relationship of man with God, proclaiming that if one seeks God earnestly with faith, God the goal become God the Guide and proved how this world is a ladder to heaven.

God guides best when He tempts worst
Loves entirely when He punishes cruelly
Helps perfectly when He violently Opposes

- Sri Aurobindo

Introduction

Confessing my inability to write the Life of such a great saint Shri Murugendra Mahashivayogi into bare outlines, narrating such a life is still highly inspiring since it affords a revelation at such an hour when material advancement is recognized as the Summum-bonum of human existence, and gratification of the senses is looked upon as the highest form of bliss, religion and the God are regarded as Superfluous.

As rightly said by Sri Aurobindo, "No man is a God but in each man there is a God and to manifest Him is the aim of divine life." Shri Murudhendra Mahashivayogi here after known as Shivayogi revealed to the world during the beginning of the 19th century as to how the human being who is a Divine Project can become and merge at last into the Divine and thus live, see, and act from Him. The chief concern of man is not only to know what God is, but to know how he can become God.

Shri Shivayogi wrote no books, nor delivered any lectures but manifested to this world, how one can realized oneself that God has made man in the image of his own eternity by his SHVA-YOGA (Linga worship) by identity of knowledge and action, word and deed (NadeDante Nudi) and Sadachara.

At the outset, it may be noted that Shri Shivayogi though stayed at Athani, Gacchinamatha, was **NOT** the Matahadhikari. He stayed at Gacchinamatha as if not staying therein or in this world, being entirely unattached (Lokdolage iddu illada Mahimaru).

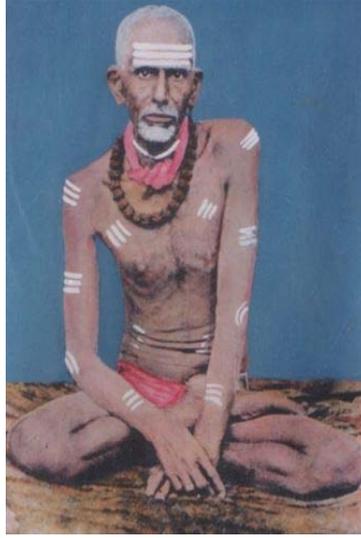
History of Gacchinamatha

His Gracious Holiness Niranjan Revansiddha Swamiji founded this holy matha known as Gacchinmatha somewhere in the 16th century at Athani. Shri Swamiji and his successor spent much of their time in preaching the devotees about the necessity of wearing Linga and importance of devotion to God (Bhakti Marg) and righteous conduct (Sadachara). They used to say, "Wealth is not Maya but a man's greed is Maya" and here now satsthala, path-way to God – destroyed the roots of rebirth in this very life and emphasized that the kingdom of God is on Earth and fundamentally, "Man is God and God is man". The devotees of Athani and round about built this math with stones and mortar called it as Gacchinmath. Nipani Pardadshi Math and Basavan Bagewadi Virktamatha are its branches. This math is really unattached in all respects as its name suggests and which is according to Sarana's principle "Beduwata Jangamanalla and Bedisikombata Bhaktanalla".

Birth of Shivayogi, His Education and Initiation

As prophesized long ago by Basava the Gurardian deity of Nadi-Ingalgaon, the birth place of Shri Shivayogi. Shri Shivayogi was born on 1st July 1836 corresponding to Ashadha shuddha 1 shaka year 1758 from the sacred parentage of Racchayyanavaru and mother Neelamma as their third son, who was named as Guru-Linga-Devaru, embodying in himself three importance precepts Guru, Linga and Jangama of Lingayata religion. Since childhood as the divine power was glowing in him, the parents brought him to Athani Gacchinamatha when he was hardly 5 years old and offered him to Sri Marulashankar Swamiji-II, the VIth Mathadhikari. Being a divine of deep insight his first Vidyaguru Shri Shivabasava swamiji of Telsang being amazed at his learning and due to his devoted services he was being cured of leprosy and having realized supernatural powers in Sri Shivayogi brought him back to Athani. He then was sent to Murigeppa Swamiji at Mamadapur in Bijapur district. From there he came back to Gacchinamatha having studied various religions and precepts of Lingayata religion. In particular, he realized that "All religions are true and all divinities are one". To experience his presence and commune with him became Sri Shivayogi's life's supreme goal. Thus giving one to God means remaining constantly in the God. He wanted to re-establish like Lord Basava how lingayat religion would elevate the persons to heavenly felicity here in this world and in so doing he made Athani a holy place, heaven on earth and a place of pilgrimage. He experienced how devotion (Bhakti) combined with knowledge (Jnana) and right action (Satkriya) were the means of realizing the divinity and the idea of Dasoha (service) gave in him the divine vision on the path of service to

humanity. Soham (I am He) is quite futile without Dasoham (I am Thy servant). He was convinced that "All is He, where is then the idea of I and you, mine and yours." All are He and His". Sri Gurushant Swamiji – II, the then VIIth Mathadhikari performed the spiritual initiation ceremony known as Anugraha bestowing "Grace" when Sri Shivayogi was 20 years of age and named him Murughendra in place of his original name Guru-Linga-Devaru.



Sri Murugendra Mahashivayogi – Athani

A detailed examination of the life of Shri Shivayogi clearly indicates that supreme bliss of Shivayoga could be attained by unqualified and steadfast devotion and worship of Ishta-linga, the symbol of divine potency and by sublimating the earthly pleasures to divine. Shri Shivayogi used to say that “it is God who does well”. “May God bless you.” Shri Shivayogi enthroned God in his heart as a constant ruler and eliminated “I” (Ahankar – Ego) altogether. Egolessness, inner purity, outward cleanliness, integral surrender to the divine, love, deep devotion and timely ceaseless worship of Linga and seeing God in every creature were the basis of his spiritual development.

Shri Shivayogi did everything himself with his own hands. To him all work was worship as it was the God who works and not the person. “Whatever act is done by me, every one of them O Lord is a worship to thee” said Shankaracharya.

He did not allow a single piece of straw to fall down from the broom stick while cleaning Yogamantap, for he used to say that nothing should be wasted even though God has given us plenty and nothing should be regarded as trifle, as everything is God’s creation and his prasada. Neither did he allow to sweep his Yogamantap for he used to say that “God has given us hands and feet to work and they must be used as work is indeed body’s best services to the divine.”

Neither had he allowed anyone to sweep his sleeping room yogamantapa at night as that might disturb the insects and other germs and flies taking rest at night therein. He considered the word Basava as “Pranava” – a mantric syllable and never pronounced the word “BASAVA” and always called BASAVA as “Appanavaru” and his vachanas as “Appanavara Vachanagalu”, daily written by him and carried them wherever he went.

Once a devotee having seen that Shri Shivayogi daily sat on the ground and slept on the floor on a blanket, brought one best arm-chair to sit and a wooden cot to sleep. No sooner they were brought Shri Shivayogi surprised all by putting upon the cot, cloth tied bundle of the Vachanas of Basava and photo of Basava on the arm-chair and himself prostrated before them expressing that there was none lesser than himself and none greater than Shiva Sharana’s devotees. Neither did he use the armchair nor wooden cot – either at Gacchinamatha or elsewhere in his whole life. The said cot and arm chair can be seen even today at Gacchinamatha kept behind the white marble statue of Shivayogi in Punyashram Yogamantapa.

He used to get up at dawn, clean his yogamantapa, then finishing his morning duties, bathe himself in the general common bath room at math and immediately come to yogamantapa for performing early morning Lingarchana. There after he used to go on foot to the garden land of Gacchinamatha known as "Appagol gund" about one kilometer from matha and himself pluck flowers and bilvapatra sufficient for his lingarchana without causing harm or trouble to creepers, flowers, plants and bilva trees, thereafter returning to Matha. For him work indeed was body's best prayer to the divine and never liked dependence. He might have used one four rubber wheeled men driven chariot hardly half dozen times in his old age for going to Appagol gund for flowers and bilvapatras given by one Sri Mandi Hariyanna of Bangalore. The said chariot may be seen at Math. Neither Sri Shivayogi allowed anyone to wash his kaupin and Linga vastras. He had no other thought but of Him – his Ishta-linga – His Lord Parashiva and no other ambition but to attain to Him. Thus he always lived and moved in God Parashiva Linga. By his devoted worship of Linga three times a day, he established that God Parashiva resides in everybody and that body is nothing but a cell to house him and is a walking temple of God and thus be kept always clean and be looked upon as sacred. To him women were neither Maya nor sudra. She too is a pilgrim longing for deliverance and journeying on the path to the divine. His life was one of true humility. He used to say that God is the shield and put trust in him. Shri Shivayogi used to send for Sri Gurubasava Swamiji of Billur Matha whenever any big festivals or functions took place at Matha as a help to Shri Siddhalinga Swamiji and also whenever Sri Shivayogi went out of Athani. Sri Billur Swamiji was an incarnation of Brahmacharya and was known as Rajayogi; known for freeing persons possessed with ghosts and blessed many a barren women to be a joyful mother of children.

Shri Shivayogi removed the darkness of ignorance by blessing His Holiness Jayadev Jagadguru Chief Priest of Chitradurg, Vagish Panditaradhya Chief pontiff of Shreeshaila, Shri Mrutyunjaya Swamiji, his devoted disciple, the torch bearer of Prasad Nilayas and education in Karnataka. To Shri Mrutyunjaya Swamiji, sympathy for the poor, Prasad (food) for the hungry mouths and enlightenment of the people by holding Shivanubhava, wherever he went became his watchword with his disciples Shri Mahantswamiji.

He knew the exact time of his final exit from this world and informed this to Shri Siddhalinga Swamiji somewhere in October 1920 that the final day would be on Saturday about six months from today. Shri Shivayogi is now entirely permeated by the absolute. All is "Light" for Shivayogi's. He has now reached the terminus of pathway to God. Shri Shivayogi's face reflected the inner charm as a result of his Shivayoga and radiated deep calmness and tranquility. A tall stature body of Golden Colour, shining with rare brightness, a large forehead, a broad chest and long arms captivated his sight in the hearts of his devotees. He meditated and communed with God after performing his Linga Pooja, thus merging mortal form in his last Linga worship with the supreme on Saturday, 23rd April 1921 at about 6.30 PM corresponding to Chaitra Vaidya 1 Shaka 1843, when the sun also set on the horizon, merging like breeze mingling with the wind, river with the sea. Sadness reigned Supreme everywhere. Amidst chanting of hymns and Bhajans, Sri Shivayogi's body was taken the next day at about 5 o'clock in the evening to his final resting place MAHASAMADHI to the right side of his Yoga mantap at Gachhinmatha. His Mahasamadhi is regarded even today as "His Living Presence". The barriers of time and space were no longer there and he who had been the light and guide of few souls became a spiritual beacon for the whole of mankind.

Devotees from all parts are coming to Gacchinmatha with the same enthusiasm and steadfastness as when Shri Shivayogi was alive, which seems to testify the reality of Shri Shivayogi's 'Living Presence' even today. A big fair in his memory is being held since 1922 for a week and cultural programs are arranged during Mahashivaratri and Shravana. Anybody who visits Gacchinamatha cannot fail to feel the thrilling experience of Shri Shivayogi's presence leaving a deep impression upon him to the path of eternal service (Dasoha) and bliss. To go inside the Math, is to merge oneself into an atmosphere full of spiritual fervor. There is an eye filling white marble statue of Shri Shivayogi in his Yogamantap at Gacchinamatha, Shri Shivayogi as already said lives here – "I am here, I am here" – in all his splendor as promised to his Late Guru Shri Channabasava Swamiji – II, the VIIIth Mathadhikari somewhere in 1882 A.D., that he would not leave Gacchinamatha, a fact testified by thousands of devotees who come to math to seek his blessings even to this day and also remained till last hour of his life as Bhaktara Bhakta (Lowest of the low).

God Shivayogi blesses, elevates, liberates whosoever approaches him with all devotion. "I make return according to the spirit in which men worship me." – Gita. He is the help of the helpless and Guide in all matters. May his blessings make this world divinely justifiable, so that, the Divine will be made known and be of easy access to every Bhakta (devotee). Where his name is chanted or meditated upon, there resides no source of anxiety, not even death.

Like great saints in the history of mankind, viz Rama, Buddha, Jesus Christ, Mahaveer, Basava, Shri Shivayogi purified the world and transformed many a men by mere touch and removed the darkness of ignorance. To call him Shivayogi is to attribute all Shivayoga qualities unto him. He is liberated in this world and in this life now acts as a source of divine energy which can be experienced by devotees visiting this Gacchinamatha even to this day.

"I am your instrument, I merely do Thy bidding
Have mercy upon me, O Lord, I am weak.
Merge me unto Thyself".

"I am Thy slave"
God's servant is something, God's slave is greater".
- Sri Aurobindo

"THE GRACE OF OUR LORD DIVINE SHIVAYOGI BE WITH YOU ALL"

For the benefit of readers of VSNA newsletter and introduction to Athani Shivayogi, the above article (NO ALTERATIONS) is compiled from following book.

"A Brochure on Sri Murughendra Mahashivayogi - The Divine of Athani Gacchinamatha"
by Shri Basavenneppa Shanmukhappa Kalyani B.A. (Hons) L.L.B.
Publisher – Dr. Halakatti Research Institute, Sholapur, 413 002

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Celebration of Shri Basaveshwara Jayanti by Maryland and Virginia Chapters

- G.Jagadeesh, Rockville, MD

Since 1998, the Maryland and Virginia Chapters of Veerashaiva Samaja of North America have been upholding the tradition of jointly celebrating Shri Basaveshwara Jayanti at Sri Shiva Vishnu temple (who is also a co-sponsor) in Lanham, MD, in association with Kaveri Kannada Association. This year's celebration, held on May 15, was a roaring success and attracted a sizable crowd.

The event started with 'rudraabhisheka' at 9:15 am followed by the cultural showcase at 11 am. The entertainment program comprising 9 different segments was mostly dominated by children and youth, (a whopping 43 participants!) and 20 adults. The program began with a welcome note by MD Chapter President, Dr. G. Jagadeesh. Ms. Shilpa Jagadeesh and Ms. Meera Basavappa eloquently managed the entire program with their vivacious and articulate compeering. Dr. Praveen Hiremath set the stage with melodious Basaveshwara vachanas starting with "aarambhava maaduve gurupooje". Children as young as 3 yrs old sang vachanas with much clarity and rhythm. Some children used musical instruments to accompany their vachanas.

The folk dance "shivana bhikshake banda"...was superb. A nritya roopaka "Om namah shivaaya" by very young children was a jaw dropping performance. The dance choreographed to "Shiva panchakshari stotra" was both spiritual and entertaining. The highlight of the day was the historical and sentimental drama: "kalyaNa krAnti".

ಮನುಕುಲಮೂರ್ತಿ, ಸಮತಾವಾದಿ ಜಗಜ್ಯೋತಿ ಬಸವೇಶ್ವರರ ತತ್ವ, ಸಂದೇಶ, ಸಮಾಜೋದ್ಧಾರಕ ಕಾರ್ಯ ಮತ್ತು ಕ್ರಾಂತಿಯ ಕಥೆಯನ್ನು ಆಧರಿಸಿ ರೂಪಿಸಲಾದ ರೂಪಕ 'ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ಕ್ರಾಂತಿ'. ಜನಮನದಲ್ಲಿ ಬಸವಣ್ಣನವರ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಇದ್ದ ಪ್ರೀತಿ, ಭಕ್ತಿ ಮತ್ತು ಭಾವವನ್ನು ವರ್ಣಿಸುವ ಜನಪದ ಗೀತೆಯಿಂದ ಪ್ರಾರಂಭಗೊಂಡು, ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ಕ್ರಾಂತಿಗೆ ಪೋರಕವಾದ ಘಟನೆಯನ್ನು ವಿವರಿಸಿ, ನೀಲಾಂಬಿಕೆ ಕ್ರಾಂತಿಯ ನಂತರದ ಕಥೆಯನ್ನು ತಿಳಿಸುವಲ್ಲಿ ಮುಂದುವರೆದು, ದ. ರಾ. ಬೇಂದ್ರೆಯವರು 'ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ಕ್ರಾಂತಿಯ' ಅಂತ್ಯವನ್ನು ಕುರಿತು ಬರೆದಿರುವ ಕವನದೊಂದಿಗೆ ಮುಕ್ತಾಯವಾಯಿತು.

All the performances were well coordinated, organized, and received a standing ovation from the audience. We are grateful to all the talented artists, coordinators, and their families for providing such a great entertainment to honor Shri Basaveshwara. All participants received a gift of either a book or Vachana Sangama CD. Virginia Chapter President Mrs. Girija Angadi, delivered the vote of thanks. The function ended with the 'mangalaarti' song "jyoti beLagutide...".

Shri Basaveshwara Jayanthi was made possible by generous donations received from several distinguished members of both Chapters. Our heartfelt thanks go to the following MD chapter members: Chanda and Jayant Bondre, Sujaya and Uday Dessai, Aruna and Basappa Doranal, Kavitha and Nandish Mattikalli, Suman and Shiva Prakash, Sudha and Raju Prasannappa, and Savitha and Tharakesh Siddalingaiah. We also thank the following generous VA chapter sponsors: Urmila and Sada Anand, Girija and Mallikarjun Angadi, Pampavati and Virupax Baligar, Usha and Halappa Hakkal and Saraswathi and C. B. Hiremath. Pooja Prasada was prepared by Smt. Neelamma Kori, Smt. Shobha Raveesh and Smt. Jayashree Jagadeesh. Additionally, the proceeds from the sale of the book titled: "Vachanas for Modern Man", written by our distinguished member Mr. Guruswamy Ayya helped defray the cost of hosting Shri Basaveshwara Jayanti. Thanks to Mr. Ayya for the generous donation.

Together we created a wonderful and memorable event while we understood the great Sharana philosophy that preaches the basis of humanity.

The Komala Prabhakar Scholarship

- Yuvaraj Patil, Chair, VSNA Convention 2010



Komala Prabhakar is Life Member of VSNA and at present she is Fundraising Coordinator for the VSNA Convention 2010. That is not the news, news is recognition for her services University of Toronto is establishing the scholarship “Komala Prabhakar Scholarship”.

VSNA Toronto owes a lot to Komala Prabhakar. She is tireless volunteer. She has helped community to organize events. Major one is VSNA Millennium Convention with 1200+ attendance from all over the world. VSNA Toronto is proud of Komala’s achievement. Some of VSNA members are voluntarily contributing to Komala Prabhakar Scholarship. We encourage more people to contribute towards establishment of the scholarship.

FROM UNIVERSITY: THE KOMALA PRABHAKAR SCHOLARSHIP

In recognition of Komala’s considerable service and commitment to the John H. Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and Design and the positive impact she has had on Daniels students, alumni and successive generations of architects and designers in the community, donations are requested to establish a graduate award to be named the Komala Prabhakar Scholarship. The scholarship, when fully funded and endowed, will serve as a continuing tribute to Komala’s service to the University of Toronto and in particular, to the student-centred approach she has created within the Daniels school.

DISTINCTION OF UNIVERSITY SERVICE: AS DESCRIBED BY University of Toronto

Komala Prabhakar was born on October 25, 1942 in Mysore, India. She obtained her Bachelor of Science in 1962 from the University of Mysore. Komala emigrated with her husband to Canada in November of 1968 when she began the first of her forty two years of service to the University of Toronto.

Since the beginning of 1974, the Faculty of Architecture and Landscape Architecture has gone through innumerable changes in administrative organization and leadership. As the sole senior administrator throughout these changes and during some of the Faculty’s more challenging times, Komala has remained committed to the smooth management and oversight of the school and has contributed to an environment that places priority on our students’ learning experience.

Komala has worked with a total of ten different administrators over the past forty two years. She has helped chart a path through many transitions in governance, leadership, and curriculum.

Komala has provided personal support to countless students, and has even extended personal financial resources to students in exceptionally needy circumstances. Komala listens to the students, provides guidance, and with deep contemplation, seeks to provide fair resolutions. She goes out of her way to help international students to adapt to the culture and environment by providing food and collecting winter clothing for those who are in need. She is available to all students, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

ಬಸವ ಜಯಂತಿಯಲಿ

ಕಾಣಿಸಿತು ಕಾಯಕವೇ ಕೈಲಾಸದ ಉತ್ಸಾಹ,
ಕೂಡಿಸಿದರು ಅಮೇರಿಕದ ಮಕ್ಕಳಲಿ ಅನುಭವ
ಮಂಟಪದ ಪ್ರೋತ್ಸಾಹ,
ಮೂಡಿಸಿದರು ಬಸವಣ್ಣನವರ ಅಮೋಘ ಸತ್ಯ
ನಮ್ಮ VSNA NCಯಾದ ಸಂಘದವರು

ಹೊರಟಿತು ಸಂಘ ಕೂಡಲಸಂಗಮಕೆ
ಇವನಾರವ ಇವನಾರವ ಇವ ನಮ್ಮವ ಇವ ನಮ್ಮವ
ಶಬ್ದವ ಹರಡಿಸುತ
ಜೊತೆಗೆಳೆದರು ಎಲ್ಲರನು ಕೂಡಲಸಂಗಮನಡಿಗೆ

ದರುಶನ ಮಾಡಿಸಿದರು ಮಹಾ ಶರಣ-ಶರಣೆಯರನು
ಪ್ರಕಟಿಸಿದರು ಬಸವೇಶ್ವರರ ಜೀವನ ಸಾಧನೆಗಳನು
ನೆನಪಿಸಿದರು ಬಸವಣ್ಣನ ಭಕ್ತಿ ಭಂಡಾರವನು
ಪುಟಿದೇಳಿಸಿದರು ಎಲ್ಲರಲಿ ಭಕ್ತಿಭಾವದ ಪ್ರೇಮವನು

ಎಲ್ಲರೂ ಕೂಡಿದರು ದಾಸೋಹದಲಿ
ಪ್ರಸಾದವ ತಯಾರಿಸಿದರು ಹರುಷದಲಿ
ಶರಣರೆಲ್ಲರೂ ಸ್ವೀಕರಿಸಿದರು ತೃಪ್ತಿಯಲಿ
ಧನ್ಯವಾದಗಳ ಅರ್ಪಿಸಿದರು ಸಂಘಕೆ ಆದರದಲಿ!

ಮಂಗಳಾ ಎಸ್. ಮಠಪತಿ
ವೆಸ್ಟ್ ಸ್ಯಾನೋಸೆ ಕ್ಯಾಲಿಫೋರ್ನಿಯ

Vachana Class

- Aman Burji, Cupertino, NC

My parents asked me one day, "Would you like to go to vachana class to listen to stories about ancient India and learn some morals?" I said, "Okay" because I always enjoy a good story. I started vachana class, and I learnt many life skills and made a lot of friends. I am learning vachanas at the classes organized by VSNA of North California and would like to share my experience about this. We learn how to lead a good life with the help of the vachanas written by some of the great vachanakaras such as Basavanna, Allama Prabhu, and Akkamahadevi.

Usually, the teachers teach us the words and tell us the meaning of the vachana. Additionally, to help us understand the meaning of the vachana they tell us a short story. Then, we learn how to sing the vachanas in their singing version. You might think, "Why learn to sing the same thing, again"? The answer is, Sometimes, when you try to sing something you have change the words to fit the tune. This year, 2010, we learnt to sing four new vachanas. The names of the vachanas are: Ivanaarava, Honninolagondoreya, Tanuva Beedidadiive, and Uura Munde. The part that I liked most about our vachana class is the story telling because I find the stories interesting.

Most of the short stories we heard were made into skits and each skit was assigned to a vachana. The first skit, which was about Basavanna telling us not to discriminate against the higher or lower caste, was with Ivanaarava. The second skit, which was about how Basavanna became the king's treasurer through his honesty, was with Honninolagondoreya. In the third skit, Basavanna learnt that everything belongs to God and the only way to please Him is to offer your service, which was with Tanuva Beedidadiive. The fourth skit is about Basavanna proving his honesty and that he didn't steal from the treasury, is paired with Uura Munde. We performed all these skits and sang the vachanas at Basava Jayanthi.

If you think about it, we actually use the teachings in our everyday lives, such as not discriminating, stealing, and to work hard all your life. So the vachanakars put these real life morals into vachanas so we can remember them easily and use them to lead a better life.

Overall, vachana class is fun and we got to hear so many stories about ancient India. It has also improved my singing and acting skills. One vachana that meant a lot to me is Ivanaarava, because it brought my friends and me together. This is the singing version:

Ivanaarava, ivanaarava, ivanaaravaendanisadirayya,
Iva naamava iva naamava, iva nammavaendanisadayaa,
Kuudala Sangamadeevyaa, Nimma maneya maganendanisayaa.

Hope you enjoyed reading about our Vachana class.

Maryland Chapter

-Shashidar Nagenalli, Secretary - VSNA-MD

The chapter celebrated Maha Shivarathri and Ugadi festivals under the guidance of the chapter president Dr. G. Jagadeesh. The events were held successfully with enthusiastic participation from the chapter members. We celebrated Shivarathri on 2/27/2010 at the residence of Mr. Umesh and Dr.(Mrs.) Uma Murthy. Ankith Murthy and Megha Kori were the emcees for the event. Children performed *Lingapooja* under the guidance of Mrs. Jayashree Jagadeesh. This was followed by chorus singing of '*Shivaastakam*' and '*Lingaastakam*', both in the praise of Lord Shiva. Children narrated the meaning for each of the recited verses. Mr. G. Ayya prepared a script on the significance of Shivarathri, which was read by Trishul and Shivani. Later, children (Trishul, Megha, Saanika, Sonum, Ishaan, Nidhi, Shivani, Samiksha, Megha Guggari, Tarun, Ankit) sang vachanas. Smt. Raji Balasubramaniam (Ankit Murthy's music teacher) led us in singing '*Rudraashtaka*' in chorus. This was followed by abhisheka to *Linga* and *Mahamangalaarathi*.

We celebrated Ugaadi by welcoming '*Vikruthi naama samvatsara*' on 3/27/2010 at the residence of Mr. Raveesh and Shobha Basavarajaiah. Aishwarya Raveesh and Navya Nataraj were the emcees for the event. The event began with a welcome song by Amit Raveesh. As is part of every chapter event, children and youth performed the *Linga pooja* and sang devotional songs. Chapter also celebrated Allama Prabhu and Akka Mahadevi Jayanthi, which falls around Ugadi. Sapna and Shivani narrated the inspirational writing on 'Allama Prabhu' prepared by Mr. Guruswamy Ayya. Dr. Siddalingaiah spoke eloquently on the concept of God as depicted in Akka Mahadevi's vachanas. The speech was followed by singing of one of Akka Mahadevi's philosophical Vachana: '*thanna vinOdakke tAnE srujisida jagatha...*'. Trishala read the meaning of the vachana followed by singing of the vachana by Trishul and Amith accompanied by Aishwarya on veena. The trio are being trained by Aishwarya's veena guru Sri Raghavendra Batni. Kids participated enthusiastically in singing their favorite vachanas and songs. Some of the songs were Nissar Ahmed's "Nithyothsava" by Anvi, "Asathoma" by Nidhi, "Tande Neenu Taayi Neenu" by Tarini. Akanksha also sang a melodious song, while Aishwarya played "Jogada Siri" on veena. The surprise performance of the evening was by a new member Praveen Hiremath who enthralled all with his singing prowess singing a few Kannada and Hindi film songs.

In the last one month, the Chapter has added 2 new families and one family became a member for the central VSNA. Mrs. Kavitha Mattikalli, treasurer, presented the financial statement for the year ending 2009. The statement was sent to the central VSNA treasurer. Members were updated on the hosting of Basava jayanthi jointly by VSNA-MD, VSNA-VA, Sri Shiva Vishnu temple and Kaveri Kannada Cultural Association. This event

is scheduled for May 15 at 9 am at the SSVT. Members were requested to take part in pooja and cultural program, and to attend in large numbers.

The committee profusely thanked members and their families for their great interest and immense enthusiasm in attending each and every function of the Chapter.

North California Chapter Quarterly Report

-Shanta Vajragiri, Vice President - VSNA-NC

VSNA NC chapter had a very busy and successful second quarter. Our dedicated committee comprising of

President Anuradha Burji
Vice President Shanta Vajragiri
Secretary Deepak Bevinamara
Treasurer Harsha Hanji
Website Support Provin Dhawan
Entertainment Team Jaisheela Kandagal, Manu Hiremath and Shilapashree Hanji
Food Team Kalpana Rajendra and Suma Moogi
Youth Secretaries Dhruva Seelin and Karan Kurbur

Successfully celebrated Basava Jayanthi on grand scale on May 16th, hosted dasoha in San Jose Family Shelter on April 4th and Red Cross Blood Drive on May 22 in San Jose.

The dasoha at the San Jose Family Shelter held on Sunday, April 4th was successfully organized with enthusiasm and commitment from all our committee and volunteers. We served an Indian meal which the committee members had cooked and the residents enjoyed immensely. We had a great turn out from our youth group. The children worked smoothly in two shifts and got the opportunity to serve the community at large.

The Red Cross Blood Drive held on May 22, 2010 was well organized daylong event. The youth committee and the VSNA youth enthusiastically volunteered and did an excellent job, offering snacks and comfort to the donors. The kids again had a great experience serving the community.

This quarter we conducted vachana classes once a week. The teachers came up with innovative ideas to make the classes more interactive and interesting for the kids. The kids were taught the meaning of vachana with illustrated stories, and were taught to sing the vachanas. The kids enacted in the short skits on Basavanna put together by the teachers. The skits and the vachana songs were beautifully performed on Basava Jayanthi by the kids. The highlight being the vachana medley dance!

Basava Jayanthi was celebrated on May 16, 2010. We again hosted the dasoha in the temple. Our committee and the volunteers cooked food in the Livermore temple. A festive meal was served Veg. Pakora, Bisibelebhath, Moosaranna, Kaalin palya, Pumpkin palya, Kosambri, Papad, Pickle and Godi huggi. Our members and the devotees at the temple greatly enjoyed this hubbada oota on Basava Jayanthi.

For the Basava Jayanthi event, we had big turn-out of the Veerashaivas in bay area for the celebration. We had melodious vachanas and Shiva bhajans sung by Smt Usha Prabhu, Sri Simha Sadashiva, and Smt. Shubhashree. The immense talent of our kids was seen in various competitions like Sharana/Sharani fancy dress, coloring, sketching, Shivlinga/Nandi making, Vachana singing etc. A very educative and interesting Sharana Sahithya jeopardy was conducted by the Sri Vishwananda Pattanshetty for our adult members who participated in teams with a lot of enthusiasm. A short handbook on vachanas taught in our vachana class Vachanagalu was released and was well appreciated by the readers. The kannada poem by our fellow vsna-nc member expresses the dedication and spirit with which the VSNA-NC Basava Jayanthi was celebrated.

Our energetic committee's hard work, our zealous volunteers help, and above all the members support and their joining us in all the events make each and every one of the events a successful one. We hope to organize and celebrate all the upcoming events with great success!

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Chicago Chapter

-Chaitra Kishore

Though the new calendar year began in January, it officially started for Veerashaivas at Ugadi. VSNA Chicago Chapter celebrated this occasion with much pomp. As usual, there were several programs by the youth and speeches and songs by the adults. What made this event unique however "Mehendi" was generously done by visiting guest Supriya Kalgudi. Anyone, young and old alike, could choose to decorate themselves with a beautiful Henna Tattoo. This added to the festiveness of the Ugadi celebration.



Festivity continued weeks later at the Basava Jayanthi celebration. This festival was held at Hindu Temple of Greater Chicago and anyone interested in attending was invited, Veerashaivas and non-Veerashaivas alike. Consequently, there was a large turn out! The day began with a Pooja held by a temple priest. It was then followed by program themed "Basavanna's Birthday." This program included songs, vachanas, and dances by various VSNA Chicago Chapter youths and adults. It was concluded by a dance from a local artist, Mrs. Asha Adiga (Srinivas) and her team. After the cultural program, Anubhava Ghosti was held with several individuals from various communities spoke on Basavanna Teaching. The celebration ended with a delicious meal prepared by various VSNA members.



Both Ugadi and Basava Jayanthi were enjoyable functions and members are looking forward to the annual VSNA picnic to be held early July.

Veerashaiva Trivia!

The FIRST three people who send in ALL the correct answers will have their names featured in the next issue! Send your answers to vsnanewsletter@yahoo.com!

1. Who gave up worldly possessions and clothed herself in her own hair for Lord Shiva?
2. Who was the key savior of the vachanas during the revolution?
3. What was Jedara Dasimaiah's kayaka or profession?
4. Fill in the Blank
Veerashaivas call Basavanna the Guru, Chennabasavana the Linga, and Allama Prabhu the_____.
5. Who was the first female Veerashaiva warrior?

Answers to last issue's questions:

1. What are places where Veerashaiva philosophy is discussed called? - **Anubhava Mantapa**
2. What is Basavanna's samadhi or burial place? - **Kudalasangama**
3. Who wrote this vachana? - **Guptha Manchanna**

I am the servant of Visnu
I am not the servant for dasoha!
I am the devotee of Visnu not Shiva!
Devotion to Shiva cannot take root in me
Help me Lord
Narayana Priya Ramanatha.

4. Who is Basavanna's older sister? - **Akkanagamma**
5. What is the case that holds the linga called? - **Karadige**

Megha Malemath from Toronto Chapter sent all the correct answers to these questions.

Well done Megha. Keep up the good work.

WORD SEARCH SOLUTION

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(Over,Down,Direction)

BEVUBELLA (7,1,SE)

CHAITRAMAASA (1,12,NE)

GUDHIPADWA (1,6,E)

HOLIGE (8,14,W)

PANCHANGA (15,1,S)

PURANPOLI (14,3,SW)

UGAADI (6,12,NW)

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Dr. Nagabhushana Malakkla

Secretary:

Mr. Shiva Maganahalli

Treasurer:

Mrs. Latha Mallikarjuna