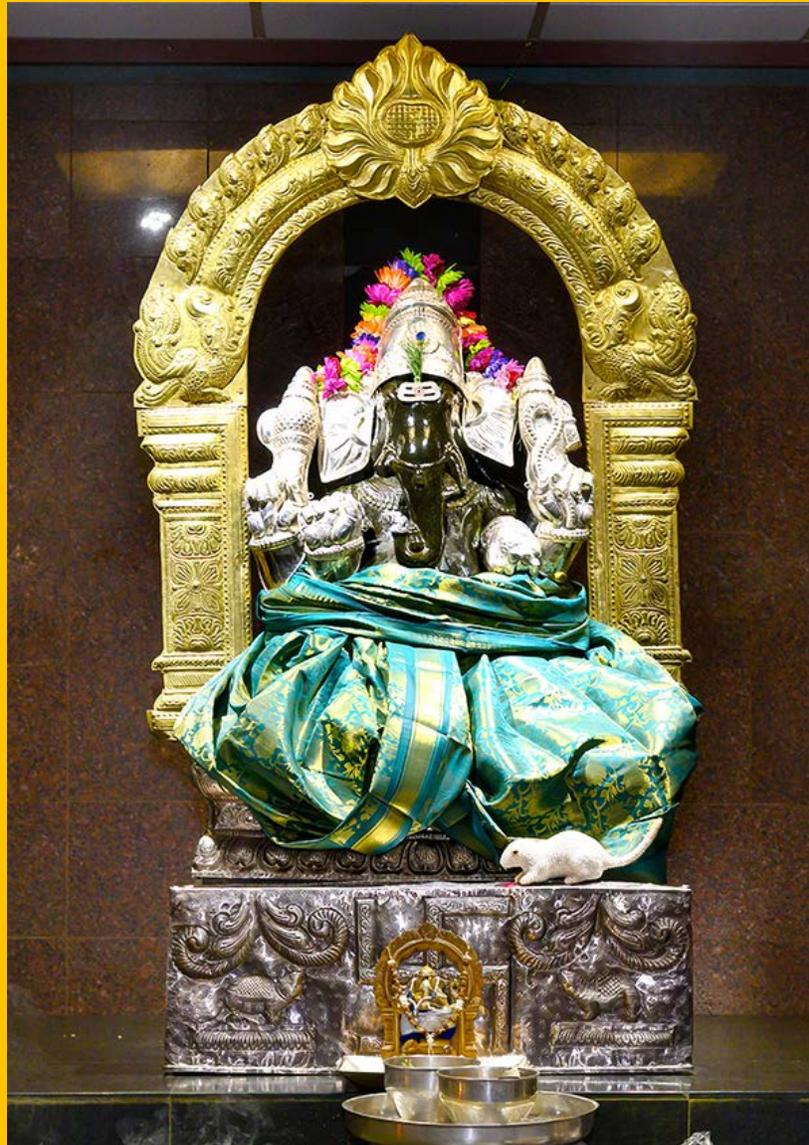


November, December 2022 & January 2023

VOLUME XXII, Issue2

ॐ SANDESH ॐ



*Hindu Society*  
OF NORTH EAST FLORIDA

# Hindu Society OF NORTH EAST FLORIDA

**DEC 3 2022**

**SATURDAY**



*Hindu Society*  
OF NORTH-EAST FLORIDA

1 UNF Drive, Jacksonville, Florida  
**UNF ROBINSON THEATRE**



HSNEF  
2022

RECOGNITION & FUNDRAISING ANNUAL EVENT

**FORMAL EVENING WITH CLASSIC  
ENTERTAINMENT & DINNER  
HONORING YOUR TEMPLE**

**LIVE MUSIC & DANCE  
PERFORMANCES FEATURING**

FLORIDA'S VERY OWN  
**ehsaas**

**UCF DANCE TEAM** NAVRASA ACADEMY  
**MRIDANGAM ENSEMBLE**  
**FUSION DANCE IN 5 DIFFERENT  
REGIONAL LANGUAGES**

SNAP TO BUY!



TICKETS:  
\$25/50/100 VIP

**SOCIAL HR 4PM TO 5PM  
PROGRAM 5PM TO 8PM  
DINNER 8 PM**

**BUY TICKETS** ↓

**[hsnef.org/gala](https://hsnef.org/gala)**

Tickets also available for at the Temple Office.

4968 GREENLAND ROAD, JACKSONVILLE 32258

**DEC 3 2022 SATURDAY**



SPECIAL THANKS TO



**ehsaas**

DHARMI SCHOOL OF DANCE

# Hindu Society

## OF NORTH EAST FLORIDA

**Friday, November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2022, Karthik Sukla Ekadashi Celebrations**  
**TULSI VIVAH 6.30-8.00 PM followed by Arati**

**Tuesday, November 7<sup>th</sup>, 2022, Krittika Deepotsava DEV Diwali Celebrations with**  
**Samuhika Satya Narayana Puja 6.30-8.00 pm**  
**(Devotees to bring fruits, flowers and Shira or Halwa Prashad)**

**Saturday December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2022, HSNEF ANNUAL GALA**  
**(Please contact office for tickets)**

**Sunday, December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2022 Gita Jayanti Celebrations 5.00 to 8.00 PM**

**Thursday, December 6<sup>th</sup> Karthikai Deepam, Karthika Swami Puja 6.00-7.30 pm**  
**Sunday January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023, Happy New Year Celebrations.**

### **Morning Schedule:**

9.00 to 10.30 am: Maha Ganapati Havan  
 10.30 to 11.00 am: New Year Ganesh Abhishek  
 11.00 to 12.00 Noon: Shringar followed by Arati

### **Evening Schedule:**

4:00 to 6:00 pm: Shri Balaji Kalyana Utsavam  
 Sarva Darshan 6.30 to 8.30pm  
 Arati : 8:30 pm.

### **Sponsorship Details:**

\$251 for entire day program , \$101 for individual program.

**Monday, January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023, Vaikunta Ekadashi Celebrations.**

**Vaikunta Ekadasi Vaikunta Dwara Puja and Vaikunta Gadya Parayana 9.30 – 10.30 am**  
**Samuhika Vishnu Sahasranama Parayana followed by Bhajan and Arati 6.00 to 7.30 PM**

**Friday 13<sup>th</sup> January Bhogi/ Lohri Celebrations**

**Lohri Celebrations 6.00 to 6.30 PM Lohri Holy Fire**

**BHOGI GODHA, ANDAL TIRU KALYANAM CELEBRATIONS 6.30 TO 8.00 PM followed by Arati.**

**Saturday, 14<sup>th</sup> January 2023 Makar Sankrathi & Pongal Celebrations**

**Sankranthi/Pongal special abhishek to Lord Ganesha 10.00 to 11.00 am followed by Arati.**

### **EVENING**

**AYYAPPA MAKARA JYOTI PUJA CELEBRATIONS**

**Ayyappa Swamy Panchamrita Abhishekam 5.00 to 6.00 pm followed by Alankaram**

**Live Bhajans 6.00 to 7.45 pm**

**Padi puja 7.45 to 8.00 pm**

**Followed by Arati & Ayyappa Ekantha Seva.**

**Sponsors Ayyappa Puja \$51 and Annadaan \$31 and above**

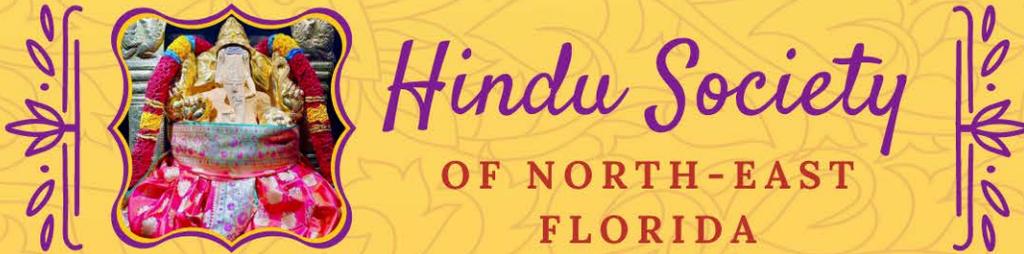
**Wednesday, 25<sup>th</sup> January, Basanth Panchami Celebrations**

**Saraswati Pujan 6.30 to 7.30 pm followed by Arati.**

**Saturday, 28<sup>th</sup> January Mata Rani Jagaran (please see for special flyer)**

# Hindu Society

OF NORTH EAST FLORIDA



*We are pleased to announce that we are  
restarting the program -  
Eat For Good Cause*

*"Eat For Good Cause" is a program where  
volunteers cook fresh food and the proceeds  
benefit the HSNEF and the community causes.*

*We need volunteers to help us with cooking.*

*If anyone is interested please send an email to  
[secretary@hsnef.org](mailto:secretary@hsnef.org) with your contact  
details.*

*Thank You,  
HSNEF*

# Hindu Society OF NORTH EAST FLORIDA

## Hindu Society OF NORTH EAST FLORIDA

Fundraising goal:

**\$350,000.00**



Raised so far:

**\$199,405.00**

WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT  
FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW

# YAJNA SHALA

IN OUR TEMPLE

We are very close to our fundraising goal. Help us make the Yajna Shala vision come true for the Jax Hindu community.

Plan displayed below.



EAST & WEST ELEVATIONS  
SCALE 1/8\"/>



NORTH & SOUTH ELEVATIONS  
SCALE 1/8\"/>

TO DONATE: CALL TEMPLE OFFICE AT (904) 268-7630

# Hindu Society

OF NORTH EAST FLORIDA

## November 2022

Date	Day	Event	Time
4 <sup>th</sup>	Friday	Tulsi Vivah	6:30 pm to 8:00 pm
5 <sup>th</sup>	Saturday	Sri Venkateshwara Suprabhata Seva	9:30 am to 10:30 am
		Shri Ram Parivar Pooja	10:30 am to 11:45 am
		Meditation Session	2:00 pm to 3:00 pm
6 <sup>th</sup>	Sunday	Ganesh Abhishek	9:30 am to 11:00 am
8 <sup>th</sup>	Tuesday	Kartik Poornima Samuhik Satyanarayan Puja	6:30 pm to 8:30 pm
11 <sup>th</sup>	Friday	Sankataharana Chaturthi Ganesh Abhishek	6:00 pm to 8:00 pm
12 <sup>th</sup>	Saturday	Sri Venkateswara Suprabhata Seva	9:30 am to 10:30 am
		Devi Pooja Samuhika Soundaryalahari Prayana	10:30 am to 11:45 am
		Meditation Session	2:00 pm to 3:00 pm
13 <sup>th</sup>	Sunday	Shiv Pooja	9:30 am to 10:30 am
		Jain Samavesh & Kids Pathsahla	10:30 am to 11:30 am
		Sankataharana Chaturthi Ganesh Abhishek	6:00 pm to 8:00 pm
19 <sup>th</sup>	Saturday	Sri Venkateswara Suprabhata Seva	9:30 am to 10:30 am
		Shri Venkateswar Abhishek & Pooja	10:30 am to 11:45 am
		Meditation Session	2:00 pm to 3:00 pm
20 <sup>th</sup>	Sunday	Sri Satyanarayan Pooja	10:00 am to 11:45 am
21 <sup>st</sup>	Monday	Mahapradosha Rudra Abhishek	6:00 pm to 8:00 pm
26 <sup>th</sup>	Saturday	Sri Venkateswara Suprabhata Seva	9:30 am to 10:30 am
		Meditation Session	2:00 pm to 3:00 pm
		BalaKrishna Pooja	9:30 am to 10:30 am
27 <sup>th</sup>	Sunday	Jain Samavesh	10:30 am to 11:45 pm
		Vainayaki Ganesh Abhishek	6:00 pm to 8:00 pm

## December 2022

Date	Day	Event	Time
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Saturday	Sri Venkateswara Suprabhata Seva	9:30 am to 10:30 am
		Shri RamParivarPooja	10:30 am to 11:45 am
		Meditation Session	2:00 pm to 3:00 pm
4 <sup>th</sup>	Sunday	Ganesh Abhishek	10:00 am to 11:00 am
		Gita Jayanthi Celebrations	5:00 pm to 8:00 pm
6 <sup>th</sup>	Tuesday	Krittika Deepam Subrahmanya Puja and Deepam	6:00 pm to 7:30 pm
10 <sup>th</sup>	Saturday	Sri Venkateswara Suprabhata Seva	9:30 am to 10:30 am
		Devi Pooja Samuhika Soundaryalahari Prayana	10:30 am to 11:45 am
		Meditation Session	2:00 pm to 3:00 pm
11 <sup>th</sup>	Sunday	Shiv Pooja	9:30 am to 10:30 am
		Jain Samavesh & Kids Pathsahla	10:30 am to 11:30 am
		Sankataharana Chaturthi Ganesh Abhishek	6:00 pm to 8:00 pm
17 <sup>th</sup>	Saturday	Sri Venkateswara Suprabhata Seva	9:30 am to 10:30 am

# Hindu Society

OF NORTH EAST FLORIDA

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		Shri Venkateswar Abhishek & Pooja	10:30 am to 11:45 am
		Meditation Session	2:00 pm to 3:00 pm
18 <sup>th</sup>	Sunday	Sri Satyanarayan Pooja	10:00 am to 11:45 am
20 <sup>th</sup>	Tuesday	Mahapradosha Rudra Abhishek	6:00 pm to 8:00 pm
24 <sup>th</sup>	Saturday	Sri Venkateswara Suprabhata Seva	9:30 am to 10:30 am
		Sri Lakshminarayana Pooja	10:30 am to 11:00 am
		Navagraha Abhishek	11:00 am to 11:45 am
		Meditation Session	2:00 pm to 3:00 pm
25 <sup>th</sup>	Sunday	BalaKrishna Pooja	10:30 am to 11:45 am
		Jain Samavesh & Kids Pathsahla	10:30 am to 11:30 am
26 <sup>th</sup>	Monday	Vainayaki Ganesh Abhishek	6:00 pm to 8:00 pm

## January, 2023

Date	Day	Event	Time
1 <sup>st</sup>	Friday	Happy New Year Program	
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Monday	Vaikunta Ekadashi Celebrations	
7 <sup>th</sup>	Saturday	Shri RamParivarPooja	10:30 am to 11:45 am
		Sankataharana Chaturthi Ganesh Abhishek	6:00 pm to 8:00 pm
		Meditation Session	2:00 pm to 3:00 pm
8 <sup>th</sup>	Sunday	Shiv Pooja	9:30 am to 10:30 am
		Jain Samavesh & Kids Pathsahla	10:30 am to 11:30 am
10 <sup>th</sup>	Tuesday	Sankataharana Chaturthi Ganesh Abhishek	6:00 pm to 8:00 pm
14 <sup>th</sup>	Saturday	Bhogi / Lohri Celebrations	
		Shri Venkateswar Abhishek & Pooja	9:30 am to 11:30 am
		Devi Pooja	10:30 am to 11:45 am
		Meditation Session	2:00 pm to 3:00 pm
15 <sup>th</sup>	Sunday	Sankrati / Pongal Celebrations	
		Sri Satyanarayan Pooja	10:00 am to 11:30 am
		Jain Samavesh	10:30 am to 11:30 am
19 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	Mahapradosha Shiva Abhishek & Puja	6:00 pm to 8:00 pm
21 <sup>st</sup>	Saturday	Sri Venkateswara Suprabhata Seva	9:30 am to 10:30 am
		Shri Venkateswar Abhishekam & Pooja	10:00 am to 11:45 am
		Meditation Session	2:00 pm to 3:00 pm
22 <sup>nd</sup>	Sunday	BalaKrishna Pooja	10:30 am to 11:45 am
		Jain Samavesh	10:30 am to 11:30 am
24 <sup>th</sup>	Tuesday	Vainayaki Ganesh Abhishek	6:00 pm to 8:00 pm
25 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday	Basanth Panchami Saraswati Puja	6:30 pm to 8:00 pm
28 <sup>th</sup>	Saturday	Sri Venkateswara Suprabhata Seva	9:30 am to 10:30 am
		Sri Lakshminarayana Pooja	10:30 am to 11:45 am
		Mata Rani Chowki	
		Meditation Session	2:00 pm to 3:00 pm
29 <sup>th</sup>	Sunday	Regular Puja	9:00 pm to 1:00 pm

# Hindu Society

OF NORTH EAST FLORIDA

## HSNEF Board

### *Chairperson*

Anurag Jain  
chair@hsnef.org

### *Vice Chairperson*

Anshu Kalia  
vc@hsnef.org

### *Secretary*

Anju Garg  
secretary@hsnef.org

### *Treasurer*

Sunil Ancha  
treasurer@hsnef.org

### *Worship*

Srilakshmi Garikipatti  
worship@hsnef.org

### *Maintenance*

Vipin Kalahan

### *Head Priest*

Kadambi Srinathji

### *Second Priest*

Venkata Pulikanti

### *Admin*

Asha Sharma  
Mahek Gupta  
Ritu Sharma  
Shree Laxmi M  
Ragha Suda

## 2022 Executive Board

**Kavita Parikh** (904) 268-7630      **Gyan Joshi** (904) 268-7630  
**Shweta Parikh** (904) 268-7630      **Padma Sikaria** (904) 268-7630  
**Vipin Kalahan** (904) 268-7630      **Parita Warde** (904) 268-7630  
**Jayprakash Pokala** (904) 268-7630

## ADVERTISING IN SANDESH

Advertising in Sandesh is an excellent opportunity for business owners and professionals looking for exposure among local Indian community. It is a quarterly publication reaching Indian community households in the Jacksonville area. Sandesh publication is also available online at [www.hsnef.org](http://www.hsnef.org).

The rates for advertising per issue in Sandesh are as follows:

**Full Page: \$100**                      **Half Page: \$75**                      **Quarter Page: \$50**  
**First and Last Page (inside) Full: 200**  
**Half: 150**  
**Last Page (outside)                      Full: 250**

## RENTAL FACILITY

Temple Facility (Multipurpose Hall minimum 3 Hours + \$75 Cleaning and Utility fees) is available for private events, personal functions, and social gatherings on first come first served basis and at a cost.

	Non-Profit	Members	Non-Members
Multipurpose Hall	\$35	\$60	\$85
Afterhours Rental Multipurpose Hall	\$55	\$80	\$105
Gokulam Hourly	\$20	\$30	\$40
Conference Room/Library Hourly	\$10	\$15	\$20
Podium/ Projectors	\$10	\$10	\$10

## Timing and Address

### **Temple Timings**

Weekdays Timings: 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM (Arati: 9:45AM)

6:00 PM to 8:30 PM (Aarti: 7:00PM)

Weekend Timings: 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM (Arati: 11:45AM)

5:00 PM to 8:30 PM (Aarti: 7:00PM)

### **Hindu Society of NE Florida**

4968 Greenland Road, Jacksonville, FL 32258

Phone: 904-268-7630

[www.hsnef.org](http://www.hsnef.org)

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## Message from the Priest

Namasthe, Saluting the Divinity in every one of you. After two years of covid, we are delighted to see you all at the temple for all festivities and celebrations. We have grandly celebrated Ganesh Chaturthi, Janmashtami, and glorious Navafratri and Dashera mela. We wish you all Happy Diwali, Annakut, and Gujarati Happy New year celebrations. This year we celebrated most of our religious functions elegantly and stepped into the last quarter of the year. Let us focus on our 4th quarter celebrations.

According to our panchang (Hindu calender), all twelve months of the year are full of religious importance. The successive months Karthik, Margashir, and Magh months are celebrated for Sadhana and Anushtaan (spiritual practice and observation). Let us know about Karthik month, which will begin on October 25th and end on November 23rd.

According to our holy scriptures, Kartik month is very Holy and celebrated for lighting the Diya (lamp at the temple) and other religious observations.

What is Karthika Month? And why it is important

Karthika Masa is a month of the extended festival celebrated for an entire month and is considered to be the auspicious and holiest month for Hindu Sanathana Dharma. Karthika Masa is the most auspicious month among all twelve months of the Hindu calendar. The name Karthika Masa is derived from Kritika star, and on the day of the full moon, the kritika star marks Kartika Masa. The holy text 'Karthika Mahatmya' (Glory of Karthik Masa) explains the importance and religious observation very well. It is also said that Kartik month is the favorite month of Lord Vishnu and Lord Shiva. This month, all the temples will be lit with a series of lamps.

The details of religious observation during Kartik month according to the scriptures. Karthika Snanam and Deepam (Holy shower early in the morning and lighting the Ghee Lamp is just minimum observation).

# Hindu Society

## OF NORTH EAST FLORIDA

During this month, one should take a holy bath early in the morning. Water is the only solvent that can wash all kinds of physical and mental impurities and can cleanse the astral and emotional currents—treating water as God or as a form of an energy (energy hidden in the atomic constituents) if we take bath by chanting sacred hymns related Lord Varuna (Om Varunaya Namah) and this would refresh all the atomic substance of the body as well as mind. Also, it would benefit us in terms of spiritual and mundane life in many ways. It is the presence of that consciousness that makes water as the universal solvent. Sacred waters are offered to Lord Shiva as an offering in Abishek. It is believed especially in this month; all the waters are charged with special electromagnetic currents; hence bathing is very important in this month.

### Daily Religious Activities during Karthik Masa

According to our holy scriptures, one should observe a holy bath early in the morning, visit temples, lighting the lamp (deepam), fast, and saligrama pooja. The most auspicious days in this season are Mondays which is very important to Lord Shiva. Per the puranas, it is believed that by performing the Karthi Masa Vratham, we can drive away the past karmas, and the sins committed can be destroyed. Lighting the lamps with ghee made from cow's milk during the sunrise and sunset will bestow divine knowledge. Brings prosperity, wealth, and health into our lives. It also burns the material desires between our birth and death. Karthik Somavara Vratham is an auspicious vratham dedicated to Lord Shiva, which need to be performed during all the Mondays of Karthik Masa.

### Kartika Masa Special Pujas List

Karthika snanam, Karthika Samudra (Ocean Bath) Snanam, Karthika masa Vratam, Karthika Deepa Daana Vratham, Akasha Deepa Vratham, Govardhana Puja, Naga Chaturthi, Naga Panchami, Surya Shashti Puja, Kartika Ekadashi, Tulasi Vivah, Kshirabdhi Dwadashi, Karthika Pournami Satyanarayana Puja, Karthika Somavara Vratham, Karthika pradosham are the major festivals and auspicious days in Karthika Masa. Rudra Havan, Shiva Puja, Rudrabhishek, Lingarchana, Kedara Vratha Puja and Satyanarayana Puja are the most essential pujas in Karthika month.

According to the Hindu faith, pujas, rituals, and other auspicious and prosperous celebrations during Kartik month give them great pleasure and happiness in life because this is month is loved by all the forms of the

# Hindu Society

## OF NORTH EAST FLORIDA

one Almighty. It most favorite month for both Lord Vishnu and Shiva. The followers of Sanathana Dharma strongly believe that Kartika's Mass religious observation will take away all the sins and bestow Moksha, salvation.

Kartik month observation will remove all the sins, and lighting diya gives knowledge, Abhishek and annadaana will bestow the merits (Punya). This is our Dharma. We must observe any part of this at our convenience. Please call the temple for any puja requests or questions regarding Kartik month observation.

Before I conclude, I wish you all a Happy & Prosperous New Year 2023. We are going to celebrate New Year with Maha Ganapathi Havan and Ganesh Abhishek in the morning (9.00 am to 12.00 pm) and Shri Venkateswara (Srinivasa) Kalyana Utsavam in the evening (4.00-6.00 pm) followed by Sarva Darshan. Please see the special events page. Lohri and Goda Kalyanotsavam will be celebrated on January 13th Friday. Makar Sankranthi celebrations fall on January 14th. On this day, we will celebrate Makar Sankranthi in the morning with Ganesh Abhishek and in the evening with Ayyappa Makar Jyothi puja 5.00-8.30 pm. We are pleased to announce that HSNEF is going for one more Mata Rani Jagaran on Saturday, January 28th 2023. The temple will celebrate two Jagaran Seva for Matarani in a year. One during Maagha Navratri (January/February) and the other during Sharad Navaratri (October). We are also working on the annual calendar, which will be published very soon.

Please participate in all our Temple Programs and be blessed by Lord Ganesha and all the forms of the One Almighty. Once again, I wish a Happy and Prosperous Happy New year to every one of you. Let us all pray to the One Almighty for good health, wealth, and prosperity. Hari Om

With Divine Thoughts

Pandit Shrinath Kadambi

Director of Worship/Head Priest

HSNEF

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# Hindu Society

OF NORTH EAST FLORIDA

Hindu Society of N.E. Florida			
Profit and Loss January - September, 2022			
		Jan - Sep, 2022	Jan - Sep 2021 (PY)
<b>Income</b>	<b>Membership Collection</b>	40,440.00	28,579.11
	<b>Hundi collections</b>	69,738.10	49,949.96
	<b>Income from classes</b>	11,320.00	15,364.05
	<b>General Donation</b>	148,185.65	107,283.59
	<b>Special Events income</b>	79,176.51	13,607.00
	<b>Interest from Bank Accounts</b>	954.86	390.97
	<b>Pooja collections</b>	65,420.05	43,696.00
	<b>Rental of Temple Facilities</b>	15,042.00	4,970.00
	<b>Garland collections</b>	51.00	2,640.00
	<b>Sales</b>	614.00	305.00
	<b>HINDU DAY CAMP INCOME</b>	37,300.00	5,875.00
	<b>Sales of Product Income</b>	1,145.00	31.00
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>\$469,387.17</b>	<b>\$272,691.68</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	<b>Employee Payroll related</b>	116,107.11	79,201.45
	<b>Special Events - Exp</b>	12,629.29	1,242.47
	<b>Utilities</b>	33,244.70	24,676.60
	<b>Credit Card charges</b>	4,743.99	3,148.27
	<b>Repairs &amp; Maintenances</b>	20,771.44	23,243.36
	<b>Legal Expense</b>	7,915.00	2,000.00
	<b>Property Tax and Ins.</b>	10,920.74	10,930.07
	<b>Classes Expenses</b>	4,810.19	6,678.00
	<b>HINDU DAY CAMP EXP</b>	10,406.09	3,243.72
	<b>Interest Paid</b>	18,411.03	24,048.82
	<b>All other expenses</b>	4,808.63	5,242.55
<b>Total Expenses</b>		<b>\$244,768.21</b>	<b>\$183,655.31</b>
<b>Net Income</b>		<b>\$224,618.96</b>	<b>\$89,036.37</b>

Additional Details for YajnaShala	
YajnaShala Donation (Dec 2021)	111,796.00
YajnaShala Donation (Jan-July 2022)	87,609.00
<b>Total Yajna Shala Donation</b>	<b>\$ 199,505.00</b>
Additional Details for the Loan	
Loan (HSNEF) beginning of 2022	835,707.06
Loan amount paid in 2022	(277,614.10)
<b>Current Balance</b>	<b>\$ 558,092.96</b>

**There is a loan payment scheduled in the month of Oct 2022 for \$100,000**

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## HSNEF Summer Camp

1. Summer camp is a special type of community where kids come together to have fun. My name is Neha and I decided to enroll my kids Aarav (9) and Mahi (8) to HSNEF Summer camp this year July 2022. It was the best two-week summer camp for Hindu religion at the temple. Every day was fun with their amazing counselors and learning new activities. This is their first time going to the HSNEF Camp, but they already told me to enroll them for next year. In the camp they allow youth and children about their backgrounds in engaging ways- performing poojas, practicing yoga, dance, and music, doing sports, making clay Ganesh, plays and performances. Aarav and mahi became more confident in talking to their Hindu friends and excited about going to the temple. Campers of all ages learn some of the mantras and shlokas that are central to the Hindu traditions. Indian music and dance are also part of the HSNEF Camp. My kids enjoyed eating lunch with their friends, playing in bouncy house, and celebrating festivals with another campers. The final day, kids perform on the stage and the energy was super high which was the most amazing part of the camp for parents. Overall, it was the best experience we have at HSNEFF camp for me and my kids.

-Neha Shah (Camper Parent)

## 2. Hindu Day Camp: A Fun Educational Cultural Experience for Indian Children in America

As someone born and raised in the US, I grew up learning about the Hindu religion and culture through my parents and grandparents. Many of my fellow Indian friends did not have the same experience and grew up knowing nothing about the Hindu religion. After having children of my own, I wished for my children to also have some knowledge of our Hindu religion. The Hindu Day Camp at the Hindu Society of Northeast Florida was exactly what I wished for and more.

This was my first year sending my 13-year-old son and 11-year-old daughter to the Hindu Day Camp. Prior to starting the camp, we had to choose their special activity. Both of my children chose acting as their special activity. I was amazed when they came home and told me that through acting, they would be learning about the Legend of Ayyappan. It would be a fun way to teach about a famous Hindu Legend. For the two weeks of camp, my kids came home every day excited to tell me about what they learned and the new friends they made.

# Hindu Society

## OF NORTH EAST FLORIDA

They also told me about the fun activities they did in camp, such as Raksha Bandhan, Holi, Bhajan battles, making tie dye shirts, learning new dances, learning yoga poses, and so much more. Sending them to Hindu Day Camp was so much better than having them stay home and play video games.

On the last day of camp, we were invited to a parent night. This is where we would learn of all the knowledge the children received during the past two weeks. I was already blown away by the beautiful Ganesh Pooja that was conducted by the campers and performed by the campers. They recited the shlokas so beautifully. Later, the children all showed what they did in their special activity. It was during this, that I saw my children as they played a part in the Legend of Ayyappan. The arts and crafts campers made all the props for the drama.

The children explained the drama as they performed it. It was such an amazing experience and exactly what I wished for.

My children certainly enjoyed the Hindu Day Camp, and I was impressed with the knowledge that they attained through the camp. They were well taken care of by the camp counselors, who showed amazing leadership. My children and I agree that this will be in our summer plans for years to come, and my children hope to someday become Hindu Day Camp counselors themselves. In short, the Hindu Day Camp is a perfect and fun way to give the Hindu Children in America knowledge of their religion and culture.

- Premal Acharya (Camper Parent)

3. My child attended Hindu camp this year for the first time. I would like to say it was an awesome enriching experience for her. She not only made her own age friends, but she also looks forward to her new friends who are counselors. All the counselors and directors were so involved and the bond they made with each child was so special. Each day she uses to look forward to attending the camp. It was not only fun, but she learned so much about Indian culture, religion, and its significance in our everyday life. I am blessed to have this kind of camp in our city and dedicated team of kids who make this such a success.

- Mahak Gupta (Camper Parent)

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## **Impediments in our quest for spirituality.**

By Dr.Kris Gopal

We often wonder why, despite all our attempts at our spiritual desire to progress, we find we are at a standstill. There are several reasons for it and let us analyze it and see how we can overcome it.

1. We cannot recognize that God is within each of us. (Avidya=Lack of knowledge).

This is even though all four Vedas proclaim it. Aitareya Upanishad states that “Prajnanam Brahma (Consciousness is Brahman); Brhadarnyaka Upanishad states that “Aham Brahmasmi” (I am Brahman); Chadogya Upanishad state that “Tat Tvam Asi” (You are that):

And Mandukya Upanishad states that “Ayamatma Brahma” (This atman is Brahman)

These four statements are said to be “Maha Vakyas” (Great Statements).

2. We do not have a strong desire to progress spiritually and attain Brahman (Realization.)

3. We lack the qualities necessary to advance spiritually. It has been mentioned in Tatvabodha and Viveka chodamani that one should have what is called “Sadhana Chatustayam” to attain spirituality. It consists of having viveka , Vairagya, six noble qualities, and strong desires to achieve it. One must understand the details of viveka and vairagya and other prerequisites.

4. We are unable to have one pointed concentration (Ekatvam). It is said that our Mind should be steady to progress spiritually like a burning light kept outside does not flicker despite the wind.

5. Our desire is for a short time only and wanes and disappears in due time.

6. Our Mind is not pure. It is said to have impurities called Malam. The impurities are said to be the following. Raga (attachments): Dvesa (aversions); Kama (Desires); Krodha (Anger); Lobha (Greed); and Moha (Delusions): One should be bereft of all these impurities by a process called “Chitta shuddi”)

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7. In addition to these, we have the vrittis (impressions of past experiences,) Chitta, (Ego), and previous vasanas. One must exhaust all these baggages.

Only with constant practice (Abhyasa) alone should one be able to eliminate these and ascend the ladder of spirituality.

We believe that we are the body and get an attachment to outside world of plurality and begin to enjoy and, in that process, are unable to cleanse ourselves. It is tough to rid of these attachments, as mentioned in Kathopanishad where an analogy is drawn between the chariot and the body.

आत्मानं रथितं विद्धि शरीरं रथमेव तु ।  
बुद्धिं तु सारथिं विद्धि मनः प्रग्रहमेव च ॥ ३॥

ātmānaṁ rathitaṁ viddhi śarīraṁ rathameva tu .  
buddhiṁ tu sārathiṁ viddhi manaḥ pragrahameva ca ..

Know the self is the rider of the chariot, and the body is the chariot. Intelligence is the charioteer, and Mind is the reins, the senses are horses (which drag us everywhere), and the objects are the roads. The atman (self) though associated with body and Mind, is the enjoyer.

One must control the Mind and senses by holding the reins so that it does not take us astride to enjoy the outside world of plurality.

Once all these are achieved, by intense faith, (Shraddha) and Bhakti (Devotion) one can attain the Grace of God (Daiva anugraham). This Bhakti is often stressed in various sections of Bhagavat gita.

These will lead one to the path of success and achieve the quest of spirituality.

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### Pooja Rates

Pooja description				
	Member	NonMember	Member	NonMember
	New price	New Price	New price	New Price
Archana	\$11	\$11	*	*
Sahasranama Pooja	\$51	\$101	*	*
Abhishekam	\$51	\$101	*	*
Satyanarayana Vratam	\$51	\$151	\$175	\$225
Satyanarayana Vratam (private in temple )	\$151	\$201	*	*
Havan	\$101	\$151	*	*
Patra Pooja	\$51	\$101	\$101	\$151
Vadamala	\$31	\$51	*	*
Annaprasanam, Chaula ( hair offering) Vidya Arambha	\$31	\$51	\$101	\$151
Shanti Path Pooja	\$31	\$51	\$101	\$151
Vahana Pooja	\$31	\$51	*	*
Hiranya Shraddha	\$25	\$51	*	*
Mata Ki Choki	\$51	\$101	*	*
<b>Note: Prior appointment appreciated for these poojas</b>				
Ganapathi/ Sudarshana Homam	\$201	\$251	\$251	\$301
Ganpathi Homam	\$151	\$201	\$175	\$225
Navagraha /Gayatri Homam	\$151	\$201	\$175	\$225
Ayush/ Shanti Homam	\$151	\$201	\$175	\$225
Chandi Havan	\$301	\$351	\$351	\$401
Seemantham with Homam	\$125	\$175	\$175	\$201
Punyavachanam with Pooja	\$51	\$75	\$101	\$151
Offering on Birthday & Anniversary	\$21	\$31	*	*
Upanayanam	\$201	\$251	\$251	\$301
Nischitartam ( Engagement)	\$101	\$151	\$175	\$225
Shashtipoorti ( 60th Birthday)				
Sahastrachandra ( 80 Birthday)	\$151	\$201	\$201	\$251
Shraddha (1st)	*	*	\$151	\$201
Bhumi Pooja	*	*	\$151	\$201
Grihaprevash/ Vastu pooja	*	*	\$175	\$225
Private Pooja (non temple hours)	\$151	\$201	*	*
Abhishekam (non temple hours)	\$501	\$751	*	*
wedding ceremony	\$351	\$401	\$501	\$701

the rate for out of town wedding services is 701 plus priest expenses

Renting any temple facilities requires a non refundable deposit of 50% at the time of booking.

## Bhajan Teerth 2022



Ridam Bhardwaj  
6th Grade

“\_The Theerth Bhajan” was a blessed opportunity for me. I got a chance to sing in front of people. I am happy to be able to sing in events like this where all other great singers are also singing Special thanks to my teacher Sh. Venkatesh sir for making all this possible.”\_

Sahaj Kalia  
5th Grade

I believe Bhajan Teerth is a great way for kids to learn about their culture. This year's Bhajan Teerth was a special and entertaining event. It was particularly fun for kids listening to the bhajans and songs.

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Arnav Khanolkar  
8th Grade

The Bhajan Teerth event was an overall success. Everyone had an opportunity to sing, and there was good distribution of time between each group. I personally liked how they planned it so the kids' events would be spread out throughout the day, instead of just having them all in one small period of time. The event was a success because of the countless hours Venkatesh Sir put in preparing each group. Our group presented a medley in Raag Shankara that was a tribute to our guru.

Shriya Aswapathy  
5th Grade

It was fun to sing bhajans with my friends at the Hindu temple. I sang bhajan on Lord Krishna. I got to listen to both of my music teachers perform at the same event. I plan to learn new bhajans and sing next year at the bhajan teerth with my friends. Thanks you Venkatesh sir and HSNEF for the opportunity.



Yukthi Palakaluri  
7th Grade

I felt like the Bhajan Teerth was a chance for kids and others to have a chance to perform or showcase their talent. I also felt like this was a chance for everyone to get together and watch the kids and adults perform again in person after the pandemic. I am happy that I got a chance to perform and watch the amazing performances of many others. Thank you to Venkatesh Guruji and HSNEF for making the event so great.

Kriya Dhimole

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5th Grade

Hello Program Coordinators,

I was very excited & happy to perform in Bhajan Teerth program with Venkatesh Uncle and his group. I felt that the program was very enjoyable. All the bhajans were calming and energetic. Thank you Venkatesh uncle for this opportunity.

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## An article on Lalitha Sahasranamam From Padma Patcha



One of the many pillars of Hindu Dharma Shastras is where we place the maternal figure, the divine Mother, above all other forces in life: Maatru Devo Bhava. Our sacred texts achieve the same— as written in the Lalitha Sahasranamam, which begins with the statement "Sri Maata Sri Maharagni." In service of this principal ideal, a group of devotees in the Jacksonville area have decided to convene at our own HSNEF during the auspicious Navratri days and chant a thousand names of Lalitha Devi. These devotees recognize that the talismanic whole of the Sahasranamam (thousand words) is more than the sum of its parts.

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The Lalitha Sahasranamam was borne out of the responsibility entrusted to Vasini and other Vagdevis by the Mother Divine, Sri Lalitha, to compose a prayer in her name. The final composition, which we have come to revere as the powerful Lalitha Sahasranamam, is renowned not only for its praise and adoration of Sri Lalitha Devi but also for the secret meanings to be found within the chantings (i.e. Chakra, Mantra, etc.). The many secrets forged within the Sahasranamam have earned it the title "Rahasya Nama Sahasra." It is essential, however, to understand that we do not just have the Vagdevis to thank for the Lalitha Sahasranamam. Lord Vishnu, in the form of Hayagreeva shared the Sahasranamam with Agastya mahamuni. Finally, the epic reaches us when the great Vyasa Maharahi adds the Sahasranamam to the Brahmanda Purana.

The fruit of the Vagdevis' labor is the beautiful thousand-name composition that we devotees are blessed to be able to chant in praise of Sri Lalitha Devi. Devi's glorious birth from the fire altar— "Chidagnikunda Sambhuta"— is described in great detail. We learn, like eager school-children, about Devi's beauty and grace as the Vagdevis chronicle her appearance from head to feet (Kesadhi Pada). Sri Lalitha's hair is adorned with Champaka, Asoka, Punnaga flowers (Champakasoka Punnaga Soungandhika Lasatkacha) and her Crown is resplendent with rows of Kuruvinda Gems (Kuruvinda Manisreni Kantkoteera manditha). The Sanskrit epic in her name tells us also of her virtues, aspects, greatness and manifestations of Mother Divine. Her flowers, her smiles, her glances are revealed to us in this Stothram in such an exquisite manner (Maha Lavanya Sevadhihi) that, when we chant these thousand names, we feel the gracious presence of Devi as though we are inside her magnificent shrine even when chanting from our own home— inviting Devi to bless our families.

The Lalitha Sahasranamam is Devi's totalizing lore, which can be found as a mode of worship to Devi in Parayanam, Archana, Homa, etc. Sri Matha is noted to be delighted when devotees chant her thousand names and bless them with both spiritual and material uplifting. Devotees who chant these thousand names daily are saved from the endless ocean of Samsara. The Vagdevis have passed down this oral tradition to us, having witnessed the Mahima of Devi up close and in ways, we cannot even conceive. Thanks to HSNEF and Pandit Ji, we can continue this age-old oral tradition and praise Sri Lalitha Devi with the thousand divine names. The temple committee's decision to add the Lalitha Sahasranamam to the schedule enables us to continue this vital tradition and brings great bliss to the devotees who dedicate the Navratri time to praise the Divine Mother, Sri Lalitha Devi, each year.

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