

The Dancing Soul

**Nourishing the Body,
Nourishing the Soul**

Lifting Zulu Spirits

**To Cook or Not to
Cook?**

**Confessions of a
Prasadam Addict**



over photo courtesy of
termaritzburg Food for Life

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Editor's Note

Seeing a hungry child probably tops the list of pictures which bring tears to one's eyes and a deep feeling of sadness to the hearts of many people. Looking at the facts and figures has certainly been alarming. The next time you are throwing out food just because you couldn't finish it or because there isn't any place in the refrigerator; think about the thousands of hungry children that are going to bed with only a drink of water.

I often remind my children of this fact when they decide that they would rather waste their supper and head straight to dessert. However, unless we have seen a five year old rummaging through the rubbish bins, we will never feel the deep appreciation for the food on our table. This issue of the Hare Krishna News brings such thoughts to the forefront.

It is estimated that a plate of food cooked by the Food for Life team costs in the region of R3.20. This amount is equivalent to buying 3 Chappies bubble gum today! Gone are the days when you can purchase so much with so little. One trip to the grocery store can cost in the region of R1000 and we can carry all those items in just two packets! With that said, R3.20 doesn't seem like a significant amount to pay for a full plate of freshly cooked vegetarian food. Food for Life KZN is affiliated to Food for Life Global, which is the world's largest vegan/vegetarian food relief programme serving over a million plates of cooked meals a day and is funded mainly by donations and corporate grants.

Please contact them to offer assistance, whether financial or with time to help with the cooking and distribution.

Haripriya Devi Dasi

Please share your thoughts by writing to me at haripriya@nitai.co.za

Quote

Srila Prabhupada on charity: "By the liberal distribution of prasad (pure vegetarian food) and sankirtan (pure sound), the whole world can become peaceful and prosperous."



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The Dancing Soul



Vibhu Caitanya Das

The devotees at the Sri Sri Radha Radhanath temple got caught up with the Soccer World Cup fever, but with a difference...

On June 16, our youth group were invited to a youth programme at Glenover Primary School. We were given a 20 minute slot and we spontaneously put together a small skit culminating in a lively kirtan. Our adrenalin was pumping and by Mother Raga Marga's

inspiration we decided to be daring and go to the beachfront for a harinama procession.

We made our way to the recently renovated beachfront beautifully done with newly paved pathways, nicely decorated piers, colourful clowns, people of different cultures, traditional dancers, juggling entertainers, the sound of music and vuvuzelas, the cheers of passionate football fans from around the world; just a complete festive atmosphere! It reminded me of a huge Ratha-yatra...but there was something missing. I looked all over for it... it was the devotees and the chanting of the holy names!

We might think why is chanting the Lord's holy names important? Yes, chanting on our beads is perfect, chanting in kirtan in the temple room with devotees is more perfect but congregational chanting in the streets is most perfect. Not everybody makes the time to visit the temple. Only a few fortunate souls have the opportunity to come and see the Lord in the temple but by this harinama sankirtana performed on the streets gives the opportunity to all

those people who are engrossed in different activities to associate with Lord Krishna—as Krishna and His names are non-different. The devotees enthusiastically chanted and danced for 2 to 3 hours daily – and sometimes even 5 hours – and one would expect to hear excuses like, 'sorry can't come tomorrow because we're tired.' But everyday as soon as the devotees got into the cars after the harinama, they asked what time was the harinama the next day. In the spiritual world every word is a song, every step is a dance and every day is a festival! We are experiencing a glimpse of the spiritual world where we engaging our mind, body and soul in the service of the Lord. It is said that on harinama the soul is dancing and the body is cooperating...



One realisation that I had is that music seems to flow in everybody and that it brings great happiness which we see in the general public moving to the rhythm of the kartalas and mrdanga. In this way everyone advances closer to Krishna. We see how that the ritual for this age is not any fire sacrifice or meditation but simply the transcendental sound vibration through harinama sankirtana. This is the topmost process.

By chanting the holy names for so many days on the Durban Beachfront, certainly transformed it to an even more beautiful place as chanting Krishna's holy names is the most beautiful. The devotees are determined to do harinama everyday despite muscle aches and fatigue. We planned our final maha harinama on June 11th, the day of the World Cup final, and it was ecstatic! All glories and sincere thanks to the enthusiastic devotees who went out every day— in sunshine, wind and rain, day or night. We pray that Lord Caitanya blesses you all to continue spreading the holy name in every town and village.

Hare Krishna!

blue lotus

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Nourishing the Body, Nourishing the Soul

By Nikunja Vilasini Dasi

“Acts of sacrifice, charity and penance are not to be given up; they must be performed. Indeed, sacrifice, charity and penance purify even the great souls.” (BG.18.5). Lord Krishna exemplified His message in Bhagavad-gita by being the most charitable person.

Once, a fruit vendor, who was captivated by Krishna’s beauty, filled His hands with fruits in exchange for a few food grains. Her fruit basket became filled with jewels. Another time, when Krishna was the king of Dwaraka, his poor brahmana friend Sudama came to visit Him, bringing only a tiny bundle of chipped rice as an offering. Krishna reciprocated with His devotee’s love by giving him wealth and opulence beyond his dreams. Krishna, following His father’s example, frequently gave thousands of cows and large amounts of food grains in charity to the brahmanas. When Krishna appeared as Lord Rama, He awarded the monkey army abundant gold and jewels and also costly gifts to the guests who attended His coronation ceremony. When Dhruva Maharaja, rejected by his father, sought the Lord in the forest, the Lord appeared before Him and rewarded him the position of king of the polestar planet. As Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, the Lord instantly manifested a mango tree from a seed, which bore luscious fruits throughout the year for his dear devotees. There are countless examples of the Lord’s magnanimity in all His incarnations. Because Krishna’s devotees offered everything to Him, Krishna gave Himself to them. More than gold and jewels, He offered them the treasure of His association and love.

Therefore, Krishna continues to explain that there are three kinds of charity – in the mode of goodness, passion and ignorance. However, the highest kind of charity is beyond the three modes of material nature. “Whatever you do, whatever you eat, whatever you offer or give away, and whatever austerities you perform – do that, O son of Kunti, as an offering to Me.” (BG.9.27)

Srila Prabhupada was often challenged that instead of engaging his followers in welfare work, he was making them lovers of God. Prabhupada gave the example that in a prison the prisoners who are engaged in hard labour may criticize others for not helping them in their efforts. He explained

that to simply help people remain comfortable in this prison-like world is not alleviating their suffering condition but giving them a temporary solution. “When a person is actually in knowledge that Krishna is the fountainhead of everything, then when he acts in that spirit, he acts for everyone. The sufferings of humanity are due to the forgetfulness of Krishna as the supreme enjoyer, the supreme proprietor, and the supreme friend. Therefore, to act to revive this consciousness within the entire human society is the highest welfare work.” (BG. 5.25 Purport)

Thus, Srila Prabhupada reminded us that the cause of our suffering is forgetfulness of our relationship with the Supreme Lord. The Lord’s mercy descends in various ways to help us get out of the prison-house of material existence and go back to the spiritual kingdom, where we truly belong. Together with chanting Krishna’s holy names, eating vegetarian food offered with love and devotion to the Lord, is the easiest method of becoming free of sinful reactions and awakening our love for Him. Thus, Srila Prabhupada established ISKCON Food for Life, which distributes Krishna’s mercy to the whole world in the form of sanctified food. Prasada literally means mercy that extinguishes the pangs of hunger and the repetition of birth and death. It is food for life – our eternal life with Krishna – nourishing the body and nourishing the soul.

*There are countless examples
of the Lord’s magnanimity
in all His incarnations*



Hungry Children Do Not Make Good Learners

Food for Life KZN daily feeds about 4000 children at different schools in critical areas. These include schools in the Chatsworth and surrounding areas as well as selected schools in Phoenix.

Although the schools are of a higher quintile ranking (this means that these schools receive far less financial support from the Department than the low quintile, poor schools), learners from extremely poor backgrounds attend these schools. According to Ms Anita Ramfol, a principal of a school in the adjoining Chatsworth/Kharwastan area, many of her learners are from indigent homes: "My learners come from homes where their parents are poor earners...many of these learners are not able to afford school fees."

She believes that Food for Life provides a much needed service in her school and the learners "wait with much enthusiasm on feeding days". It is however, unfortunate that daily feeding at her school is not possible – she noted that "this will be the ideal situation" where no child goes hungry in her school. From her experience, she has observed that children get hyperactive because they feed on cheap, unhealthy food – this leads to poor discipline in class. She agrees that "hungry children do not make good learners". Children need food to keep them focused so that they can learn.

Food for Life continues to provide hot meals to other schools on different days of the week. These include Crescent Ridge, Highlands, Brookland Heights, Crossmead, Wyebank, and Truro primary schools. Adopt a school in your area and feed a hungry child today!!!!

Did You Know?

For South Africa, the cases of malnourished children are an exception in their starkness. Relief workers say the tragedies are not on a scale seen elsewhere on the continent. But they illustrate a sad paradox: In a nation that promotes itself as Africa's most powerful food producer and, in normal times, its greatest exporter of grains, 2.9 million black people under the age of 15—more than a tenth of the black population within South Africa's traditional frontiers—suffer from clinically diagnosable malnutrition. Some 35,000 to 50,000 children die each year of illnesses related to or made worse by deficiencies in their diets.



"No One Should Go Hungry"

His Holiness Mukunda Goswami explains the spiritual significance of prasadam distribution: Profuse distribution of prasadam (vegetarian food offered to Krishna) is integral to the Hare Krishna movement. Srila Prabhupada writes in his commentary on the Caitanya-caritamṛta: In the Hare Krishna movement the chanting of the Hare Krishna maha-mantra, the dancing in ecstasy and the eating of remnants of food to the Lord are very important. One may be illiterate or incapable of understanding the philosophy, but if he partakes of these three items, he will certainly be liberated without delay. Elsewhere Srila Prabhupada explains, "Actually, by eating such maha-prasadam one is freed of all the contaminations of the material condition." Commenting on a great festival held by the saint Madhavendra Puri at Govardhana Hill in India, Sréla Prabhupada explains that after all the food was offered to



the Gopala deity it was then distributed to everyone. People brought all the food they had in stock, and they came before the Deity not only to accept prasadam for themselves,

but to distribute it to others. The Krishna consciousness movement vigorously approves this practice of preparing food, offering it to the Deity, and distributing it to the general population. This activity should be extended universally.... Giving prasadam specifically to the poor is also an important theme in Vedic literature, the Srimad-Bhagavatam glorifies King Rantideva, who, at the point of breaking a forty-eight-day fast, fed two beggars the very food he was about to eat. Srila Prabhupada explains this selfless quality:

A Vaisnava is therefore described as being...very much aggrieved by the suffering of others. As such, a Vaisnava engages in activities for the real welfare of human society.

Little Vaisnava's Column

Children's Holiday Programme

By Rasa Keli Sowamber (10 years old)

I attended the World Cup soccer match between the Netherlands and Slovakia at the Moses Mabida Stadium, visited the FIFA fan fest/park, and watched "Toy Story 3" but I found that the best part of my holidays were the three days that I spent having holiday fun at the Hare Krishna Temple in Chatsworth. We played various games eg. Broken telephone and "Krishna says...." Broken telephone was my favourite. We also made beautiful crowns which were offered to Sri Sri Radha Radhanath.

As I love acting, I thoroughly enjoyed when we enacted an interesting drama called "The Brahman's Wives." (I was one of the wives and got my face decorated with pretty gopi dots!) From this story we learnt that practising what we learn in Krishna consciousness is more important than just knowing it. We also learnt to be kind and to know what pleases Krishna the most. Before the drama, we did yoga. It helped us to relax and we were "taken" to Vrndavana to meet Krishna, the gopas and the gopis.



We also had a quiz with the girls competing against the boys - Krishna's and Radha's teams. I enjoyed answering questions based on the day's activities and also some general knowledge questions. The girls won and the boys wanted another quiz to come back into the game. Tuesday was Pandava Nirjal Ekadasi. We listened to a talk explaining what Ekadasi is all about; the story of Bhima and what "nirjal" is and what foods we can and can't eat on Ekadasi.

On Wednesday we had a colour-in and essay competition. We also went on a tour of "Nandagram," the organic vegetable garden. Dennis the gardener showed us the huge variety of fruit and vegetables that are being grown which will eventually be offered to Krishna. Later that day we watched a bit of the Abhay Charan DVD and then wrote our Vyasa-puja offerings to Srila Prabhupada. We then got our hands all messy by decorating biscuits with icing.... And then a final quiz which the girls won again!!!

The goodies that we took home with us included colouring books, a special beanie and our maha crowns! I treasure these gifts, the memories and friends that I made over these three very special and exciting days.

Colour-In Competition Winner

Syamalika Pillai
(8 years old)



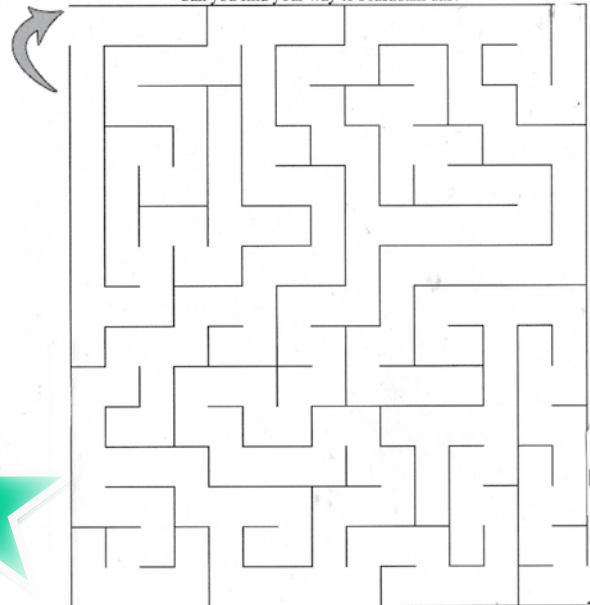
Children's Essay Winner!

"For many days I was taking out my dhotis and kurta shirts to see what I can wear to the Ratha Yatra Festival. Then finally the festival was here. The devotees were dancing, chanting and watching dvds of Krishna. I was looking forward to the next day because we got to pull the deities of Lord Jagannath, Subhadra and Lord Balaram. I liked when I was on Jagannath's chariot. I was throwing sweets and flowers to the devotees. When we reached the site we were throwing fruits. Everybody was coming to the chariot because they wanted the Maha Prasad and biscuits. The best thing I liked about the festival was the singing, watching movies of Krishna, eating and listening to kirtan. That was the last day of the festival."

Jagannath Chetty,
11 years old

MAZE CRAZE

Can you find your way to Prasadam das?



Start Your Own Organic Veggie Garden

By Mayapur Candra Das

We sit down to a lovely plate of cooked veggies and as we look down, we start to become nervous at the R9 broccoli and the R7 cabbage looking up at us, not to mention our genetically modified Mielie on the side plate! Fear no more! There is a solution for all of us to soften the blow on our pocket and have fun doing it. Almost everyone can start their own veggie garden and experience the rewarding satisfaction of cooking a home grown meal.

There are some simple guidelines: First it is important to know that we need to take just as much care of our soil (actually more) as the plants. Living soil comprises of trillions of microbes which include bacteria; yeasts; fungi and algae, which break down nutrients. This helps plants to absorb the nutrients. If we put chemicals in our soil, we will kill them and the natural cycle of life is destroyed basically. Healthy soil ensures healthy plants. Try to get open air pollinated seed or organic seed so that we can save the seeds for the next season. Other seeds won't give a good crop next season.



Organic garden at
Sri Sri Radha Radhanath Temple

When preparing a bed, remember the deeper we loosen the soil, the better the roots will penetrate—roots help to feed the plant and we will also need less water.

Once the soil is loosened, don't step on the bed again, rather shape the bed that you can easily reach over the middle from either side (about 1.2m) then it can be made up to about 9m long. Don't plant the same thing in the same place next season. Crop rotation is very important, because different plants need different nutrients. Cover the top soil with grass or leaves. This is called mulch and protects the soil from the harsh sun, suppresses weeds as well as keeps the water in.

Try and create your own compost heap or get a worm bin(they will do it for you). There is no need for organic waste, everything should go back into the garden. When it's time to take the plant out, try to cut it rather than pulling the roots out, they nourish the soil a lot. You will be amazed at how much we can get from a little space. The secret is to start small so you don't lose enthusiasm.

If you would like more information please contact Mayapur Candra Das on 0726057165.

Vaisnava Kitchen: Kitchri

Srila Prabhupada, "Kitchri and yoghurt...a poor man's feast fit for a king!"

By Hemangi Devi Dasi

Kitchri is a combination of boiled rice, dhal and vegetables. It is a good source of iron and protein. It can be made in large amounts fairly easily, which is why many Food for Life programmes serve kitchri. It can be made in a variety of ways and you can vary the consistency.

Ingredients:

200 g yellow mung dhal

250 g basmati rice

After cleaning these, soak dhal and rice together

1 cup each of any/or all of the following vegetables:
cauliflower, carrots, baby marrows, squashes, green beans, peas, potatoes, butternut, spinach, etc.

3 tbs ghee

3 tsp cumin seeds

2 green chillies (finely chopped)

2 tsp grated ginger

½ tsp hing

About seven cups of water

2 tsp tumeric

2 tsp salt

Method:

1. Heat ghee, add jeera, cumin and ginger, let spices sizzle then add hing.
2. Add vegetables and cook for 4 to 5 minutes. Stir vegetables until slightly browned.
3. Add drained rice and dhal and stir fry for a minute.
4. Add all the water.
5. Add the salt and tumeric and bring to a boil on high heat.
6. Reduce heat and cook on low for about 30 minutes. Keep the pot partially covered.
7. Stir once or twice to prevent the rice from sticking to the bottom.
8. After the rice has softened, you can keep it on low heat until you get the consistency you want (runny, medium or dry).
9. Add a blob of butter and let it melt. Sprinkle some black pepper for extra seasoning.
10. Give it a final mix and serve hot with a slice of lemon, tomato chutney, yoghurt, or khadhi sauce.

Lifting Zulu Spirits

By His Holiness Indradyumna Swami

SINCE MY ARRIVAL IN South Africa [January 19, 2002], Laksminatha Das has been inviting me to take part in one of his daily Food for Life programs. We drove north out of Durban through sugarcane fields to Kwa Mashu and pulled up along a ridge overlooking a beautiful valley. As I surveyed the ridge sloping down into the valley, I saw small dwellings assembled from all sorts of material—planks of wood, sheets of plastic and pieces of old corrugated metal—all bound together in various shapes and forms. I couldn't imagine life inside such shacks.

Laksminatha said, "Let's do harinama from this spot down into the valley. We'll distribute prasadam at the bottom." Picking up a mrdanga drum, I began playing a few beats. Turning my head, I was startled to see hundreds of Zulu children, running toward us along the dirt road leading into the valley. They had all kinds of receptacles in their hands for getting prasadam—bowls, cups, pots, dishes, and even big garbage bins. They were running and calling out, "Hare Krishna!" I kept playing the drum and began singing Hare Krishna. Within moments, all the children had surrounded us. Immediately swept up in the kirtana, they began dancing.

Sergeant Singh said, "They love the drum beats. It's in their blood. Wait till you hear them sing. Zulus have beautiful voices!" Hearing that, I asked the kids, through a small sound system, to repeat the maha-mantra after me as I sang. As they all responded in unison, I was struck with wonder. They really did have beautiful voices. Harmonizing naturally, they sounded like an experienced choral group.

I kept the kirtana going strong, playing the drum as hard as I could and chanting loudly. The sound reverberated off the nearby hills, announcing our descent into the valley. The kids were responding to the kirtana like nothing I'd ever seen, dancing and chanting Hare Krishna in delight.



As we went along, more children joined us, spontaneously coming out of the shacks. The happy mood contrasted with the dirt and filth of the township. Finally, two hours later, we reached the bottom of the valley, where hundreds more people were waiting for prasadam.

As Laksminatha opened the doors, there was a stampede of children toward the van. Several of the Zulu men stepped forward and commanded the children to form lines and wait patiently. As I dished out the kitchori, rich with butter and various vegetables, the children kept asking for ever larger portions. After an hour, a big group of children motioned to me to come and sit with them on the grass. I got down from the van and went over with Sergeant Singh. There were well over a hundred children sitting tightly in a circle, and as I sat down they all pressed forward to be near to me. All eyes were on me. "The little ones have never been this close to a white man before" he said.

By their enthusiasm for kirtana and prasadam, they had proven themselves worthy of Lord Caintaya's mercy. So I picked up the drum, and even before I started playing it they were already moving their bodies to an expected beat. When several of them called out "Hare Krishna," the rest quickly followed. There are ten million Zulus in KwaZulu-Natal, and they all have sweet voices!"

*Photos courtesy of
Sri Nathji Das*



Children Relish Sri Vyasa-puja

By Kribashne

H.H. Indradyumna Swami's Vyasa-puja celebration (anniversary of the appearance of the spiritual master) was held on Sunday, 23 May 2010 at Sri Sri Radha Radhanath Temple.

The term Vyasa-puja refers to the offerings of homage and appreciation to Srila Vyasadeva, who appeared to assist Lord Krishna's mission. Sri Vyasa-puja is a true offering of love and gratitude to the spiritual master who is following Srila Vyasadeva, under the shelter of Srila Prabhupada. Indradyumna Swami (affectionately referred to as Srila Gurudeva) has taken the holy

names to the native tribes of the Amazon Jungle, Gypsies of Siberia, Tsunami victims of Sri Lanka, Polish Woodstock Festival, Tour along the Baltic Sea Coast, through the various continents of the globe. He has left his footprint through the many coastlines and mountainous regions that he has toured, but more importantly he has touched the hearts of all those that he has come into contact.

Srila Gurudeva shows special affection towards children by endeavoring to include them in various festivals, and is noted to host special Krishna Conscious parties for children. He often has a shadow of excited and eager children follow any program or festival that he attends. With a culture of instilling a positive relationship with Krishna, these experiences for the children will be

embedded in their young minds. Psychological research proves that an experience as a child has a lasting impact and is sure to have an influence in adulthood. This mood of affection and love to children, by a special ISKCON leader, will surely influence their mind and actions in later years.

In keeping with Srila Gurudeva's tradition, 50 children from an underprivileged community in Wentworth, south of Durban, were invited to participate in the Vyasa-puja celebration. Members of The Wentworth Organisation of Women's and Family Resource Centre accompanied the children to the temple. The excited group were taken on a tour of the temple and were then briefly explained a few basic Vaisnava practices. This took the discussion to the reason behind their invitation, that being the 'birthday party' of which they were the special guests! The children clapped and chanted enthusiastically as they assisted H.G. Syamlal prabhu to cut the birthday cake!

In true party style, after taking a sumptuous plate of Prasad, each child was treated to a 'goodie bag' which contained various treats, stationary and a Krishna colouring book. Patricia Dove, the Chairlady of the Organisation and the Director of the Resource Centre said, "When the kids were chanting I could see their little faces light up! They thoroughly enjoyed their time at the Temple." For Dove, what personally stood out for her was the 'food'! "For the ladies who accompanied the kids, we loved the food. The Hare Krishna's really know how to put on a festival", said Dove.

For these children, who have come from disadvantaged and difficult backgrounds, their visit and experience to the Temple will be very dear to them. Their appreciation for their visit was seen on their smiling faces upon arrival but very sad faces as they boarded the bus upon departure! In keeping with the exemplary example set by Srila Gurudeva, we wish to welcome many more children into our society, thereby assisting in planting the seed of devotion, through these preaching efforts!





Interview with Food For Life Director His Grace Jatipur Das

Recently Food for Life was restructured to a section 21 company. This means businesses and organizations can contribute to Food for Life and receive a tax benefit for their donations. Food for Life, being a non-profit organization will also be excluded from tax. Jatipur has been involved with Food for Life for over fifteen years. As one of the five directors of Food for Life KZN, he shared his insights and vision with us: As a community service opportunity, Food for Life will be launching a special program for all school children from grades 10 – 12. This program will include a full day's activities detailing the entire process from cleaning vegetables to cooking and to final distribution to allocated areas. All attendees will be awarded a Food for Life certificated stating the number of hours of community service rendered. This certificate can be added to the students Life Orientation portfolio.

Jatipur Prabhu says the team's vision is to increase the number of plates of food distributed from four thousand to twenty thousand, daily. In order for them to accomplish such a huge and wonderful task, they require tremendous assistance, especially from the Nama-hattas in KZN. The Food for Life team

is prepared to help set up premises, offer a start-up kitchen and provide any other help with sourcing vegetables, cooking and distribution. Another amazing long term goal is to build open clinics and hospices. Food for Life recently purchased a new vehicle which will be used for food distribution at major universities and institutions in KZN. Jatipur said, "Among the many challenges faced by Food for Life, we find that integration is a major problem. Communities need to be taught how to grow their own vegetables thus being able to sustain themselves. We are currently working on a project of passing on these skills onto rural communities. Food for Life will then purchase these crops for their cooking. The main aim is to eradicate poverty and engage in community trade."

Jatipur Prabhu assures that the City Health Department takes regular samples of food and test different areas of their kitchen. He is passionate that we have the highest standards, "We have received and maintained a good reputation with the department." Jatipur Prabhu feels that apart from the important benefit of distributing food to the hungry is that we develop the qualities of charity, compassion and respect for others.



The Food for Life Team: (L to R) Subananda Das, Isvara Puri Das, Viresh Panday, Jatipur Das, (in front) Radha Prema Dasi, Kavitha and inset Prabhanu Das (FFL National Liason)

FOOD FOR LIFE is a nonsectarian and non-discriminating organization that respects all religions and cultural traditions. It was founded by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada as a charitable branch of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) in 1974, and has volunteers from all religious and racial backgrounds who are involved in programs all over the world.

For more information please contact Kavitha on 031-5781347 or e-mail: food4life@telkomsa.net

Devotee Focus: Laksminath Das Our Resident Food For Life Man!



Laksminath Prabhu was enthusiastic to share his story, “In 1978, being heavily involved with a Hindu organisation, I felt a deep desire for distributing knowledge. Sometime during that year, a friend took me to visit the ISKCON centre in Cato Ridge. On attending the Sunday programme we met H.G. Gokulananda Prabhu. Unaware of the deep meaning and benefit of performing devotional service, I asked Gokulananda to them with book distribution.

In 1985, being a carpenter, I was asked to assist in the building of the Sri Sri Radha Radhanath temple in Chatsworth. Taking this as just another job, I was pleasantly surprised when after a few years I felt the deep urge to join the temple. Being the middle child of seven siblings, I asked my mother for permission, gave up carpentry, and became a full-time Hare Krishna devotee in 1986 when the temple officially opened.” But this was just the beginning.

Kapila Prabhu, who was in-charge of the Food for Life programme, decided to immigrate to the US in the early nineties. He handed over this wonderful service to Laksminath Prabhu. “Even though I had never cooked before and without any formal training, I took up the service with great determination and enthusiasm to make a difference,” he said. Twenty-three years later, Laksminath Prabhu indicates that his passion and drive for the distribution of free food, has increased with every passing year. After taking over the entire operation, which required the collection of funds, ingredients, cooking and distribution, he first began distribution to rural areas and townships. After four

years, he introduced Food for Life to universities and to central Durban. This meant that Laksminath Prabhu had three shifts, including a night shift, in order to meet the demands of the distribution network. During the election period he encountered many challenges including being chased out of a township! Even though it became dangerous at times he still found the service deeply gratifying.

Inspired by Srila Prabhupada who took sympathy on the children and dogs sharing food from the trash, Laksminath Prabhu took on a project of tackling disaster areas. He assisted in Mozambique during the major floods; when Sri Lanka was destroyed by a Tsunami; and on January 21, 2010, he was part of the first wave of International Food for Life Global volunteers to arrive in Santo Domingo to join the local FFL staff in finalizing set up for food distribution for the vegan food relief programme in Haiti.

What brings him the most gratification, “Seeing the joy on the children’s faces! I am convinced of the potency of prasadam as more young people are becoming vegetarian. Prasadam is definitely another form of purification. Through Food for Life, Hare Krishna became a household name.” Food for Life is now Laksminath Prabhu’s identity.

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Founder Acharya His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

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Kalash Maha Abhishek

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2 September 2010

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- A maha garland
- Jewellery worn by Sri Sri Radha Radhanath
- An arati set
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Young Achievers... Gold for Devotee!

Sanhaviya Sookrajh, a devotee attending the Sri Sri Radha Radhanath Temple won a gold medal after competing in the 9th Zone 6 Karate Championship in Harare, Zimbabwe on 30 May 2010. She represented South Africa together with 70 others to take on teams from Angola, Mozambique, Botswana, Zimbabwe and Namibia. She has the opportunity to represent South Africa at the Common Wealth Games in Delhi and other competitions in Serbia, Greece and Namibia.

When interviewed she said, "Firstly, I pray to Caitanya Mahaprabhu just before every event...for His mercy and more especially His protection. Some of the fights can get rough! Praying to Him also calms me down especially during the kata demonstrations. In this event I am required to demonstrate several kata movements and this can become intense especially when there are four judges watching. Many athletes are surprised when I tell them that I only eat pure vegetarian foods. This shows that I am not unhealthy or weak from being a vegetarian...this is the opinion of some of my karate friends and you have to work hard at whatever you do to be successful...and of course stay focused on Krsna!"

Healing from your Kitchen

By Heather Hillhouse

Black pepper

Take black pepper corns and steep them in boiling water for 15 mins, add to this some crushed fresh basil leaves. Leave to stand until cool. This can be used for an effective mouth wash and is also good as a gargle for a sore throat.

The Bhaktivedanta College of
Education and Culture
presents a study of Srila Rupa
Gosvami's books



Please refer to college prospectus for
more information or contact
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Nectar of Devotion

A summary of Srila Rupa Gosvami's **Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu** describing what is devotional service, how to perform devotional service and the power of devotional service.

Dates: Starts Saturday, 1 September

New Jagannath Puri Temple:
Raghunatha Bhatta Das

Sri Sri Radha Radhanath Temple:
Ramanujacarya Das

Nectar of Instruction

Srila Rupa Gosvami's first book discussing
Vaisnava practices that protect and grow our
devotional creeper

Dates: 28-29 August and 4-5 September

New Jagannath Puri Temple:
Pundarika Vidyanidhi Das

Sri Sri Radha Radhanath Temple:
Jaisacinandana Das

Prasadam Benefits the Soul!



Prasadam (food that is offered to Krishna) distribution is an important devotional activity. Anyone, who engages in distributing prasadam will be blessed.

Krishna states in the Bhagavat-Gita (9,26), "If one offers Me with love and devotion a leaf, a flower, fruit or water, I will accept it." Therefore, in order to have a close relationship with Krishna we should not offer meat, fish or eggs to Him. Vegetables, grains, fruits, milk and water are the suitable foods to offer and then eat. As devotees we understand the importance of eating prasadam and are enthusiastic to distribute prasadam to everyone. Srila Prabhupada stressed on prasadam distribution, this makes the Food For Life program a very important one. Let's encourage our friends and family to eat prasadam, as whilst we enjoy the taste, we are also develop a relationship with Krishna!

Confessions of a Prasadam Addict

Author Unknown

An excerpt from a devotees' love affair with prasadam—this particular description is his very first encounter....enjoy!

That night I dreamt that I was in a temple, surrounded by hundreds of Hare Krishnas. Startled I woke up and looked at the clock, it was 4am. I ran down to the temple in time to make the arati. Right after the ceremony, somebody gave me some beads and told me I was supposed to chant 16 rounds of Hare Krishna on them every day and that it would take about two hours. I went along with it although it took me most of the day because I could only do one or two rounds at a time. Anyway, there was some more singing and dancing and far-out lecture about the universe coming out of somebody's navel in the form of a lotus flower with a big four-headed guy on top. I was loving it.

Finally breakfast time arrived. By now I was ready for anything. Actually, I'd been smelling it cooking and the wonderful aroma was driving me crazy. Everybody said a strange prayer over the food. "This material body is a lump of ignorance. The senses are network of paths leading to death." It was pretty morbid but it didn't deter my appetite. I dove right into the mass of golden-brown whatever it was and became instantly amazed. It was soft and aerial like foam rubber, except that it was little slippery due to the presence of the yellow liquid. It was also nice and warm.

When I tasted it, I went wild. It was super rich, yet seemed to be as light as jello. I could have eaten a ton of it but I only got one serving. I found out they called the brown stuff halavah.

ISKCON Vaishnava Research Forum Lectures

Theme based forum lectures are held every alternate Wednesday at the Sri Sri Radha Radhanath Temple!

The next theme focuses on the glories of the Holy Dhams (Sri Mayapur Dham, Sri Vrindavan Dham and Sri Jagannath Puri Dham).

Highly interactive and stimulating discussion.

We are planning an exciting Ekadasi cooking demonstration which will provide a variety of alternative Ekadasi recipes.

Iskcon Vaishnava Research Forum is now based in the new wendy-house office at the Sri Sri Radha Radhanath Temple.

A range of courses and study group sessions on various aspects of Krishna consciousness will also be held there.

For further details of the Wednesday Forum lectures and other VRF activities, please send an e-mail to vaishnava.research@gmail.com

Food for Life Feeding Chart

TUESDAYS

Moorelands	160
Crescent Ridge	50
Crossmead	40
Home Affairs	50
Tongaat	1000
Kwa Mashu	1500
Highlands	72

Total 2872

WEDNESDAYS

Alencon	250
Ndengetho Secondary	250
Wyebank Molweni	
Demat	1250
Cansa Association	40
Kwa Mashu Development Centre	50

Total 1840

THURSDAYS

Truko	180
Welebedacht	700
Umzinto	700
Umkomaas	600
Youth for Christ	700

Total 2880

FRIDAYS

Brooklyn Heights	900
Moorelands	160
Crescent Ridga	50
Highlands	75
Total	1185

SATURDAY

Hillcrest	500
Bothas Hill	500
Nyuswa	500
Total	1500

MONTHLY SCHEDULE

St. Francis Parkryne	900
Naiddoville Umkomaas	800
St. Patricks Umzinto	600
Waterloo (March 2010)	3000
Bat Centre (April 2010)	500
PMB Health Department (20 May 2010)	1000
Sakhi Sizwe Reception Centre (5 June 2010)	500
Tongaat (May 2010)	2000
UDW (July 2010)	1000 per week
UND (July)	1000 per week
Rural Areas	500 per day

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Ombudsman

ISKCON KZN Ombudsman is Baram Das PSDG.
His contact details are: 082 877 0753 or
bio-success@absamail.co.za

Notifications

Would you like to receive SMS or email notifications about various happenings and updates? Send us an email: kzn@pamho.net

**His Holiness Lokanath Swami's
Bhagavata-katha will be held from
18-20 August (Wednesday-Friday)
from 7pm until 9pm nightly.**

Announcements

Initiations – congratulations to the following devotees who were initiated by His Holiness Bhakti Caitanya Swami on 4 July at the New Jagannath Puri Temple in Phoenix:

First Initiations

Roshan – Rasa Mandala Das
Renuka – Rasa Lila Devi Dasi
Keegan – Krishna-Kripa Das
Avith – Ananda Caitanya Das
Bill – Baladev Das
Ruby – Revati Devi Dasi
Karishma – Kamala Manjari Devi Dasi
Shanal – Shyma Kishori Devi Dasi
Hemwathie – Hari Bhakti Devi Dasi

Second Initiations

Syamarani Dasi
Prema-priya Dasi
Tamal Krishna Das
Namamrith Das

Thank you to Mr. and Mrs. Rajbansi for their kind sponsorship of new chairs, a teacher's chair and desk for our BCEC college room at Sri Sri Radha Radhanath Temple.



Rupa Sanatan Das and his team



Acutyananda Das

Launch of Gap Year 2011 in Mayapur

Taken from www.dandavats.com written by Sukanti Radha dasi

Are you tired of mundane studying? Thinking of taking a gap year? Don't know where to go? Well no need to think further as Mayapur Worldwide and Mayapur Institute of Higher Education (MIHET) has just launched a brand new Gap Year programme!

The programme holds a colourful array of events guaranteed to transform your heart and give you an opportunity to immerse into the energy of the holy dhama. Peace of mind for any student! A relief for any parent! The Gap Year programme is relaxed and acts as a prelude to the Bhakti Sastri course giving students more time to relish the mood and lifestyle which Bhakti Sastri students cannot seem to get enough of. The Gap Year Programme includes: **learning to play musical instruments; deity worship course bhakti sastri; learn basic Bengali (optional); weekly feed the village programme with Shastra Das; attendance and special services at all major festivals; in Mayapur including Gaura Purnima 2012; numerous services at major ISKCON Mayapur projects; annual Bhakti Yoga summer university tour with students worldwide conducted by Bhuta Bhavna Das; personal development programme.**

For details on bookings and pricing please contact Padmanayana das (+91) 0947439402 or E: padmanayana@gmail.com or Sukanti Radha dasi E: mayapurworldwide@pamho.net. You can also visit www.mayapurworldwide.org or www.mihet.org

To Cook or Not to Cook?

ISKCON Pietermaritzburg share their inspiration for Food for Life

By Haridas Das

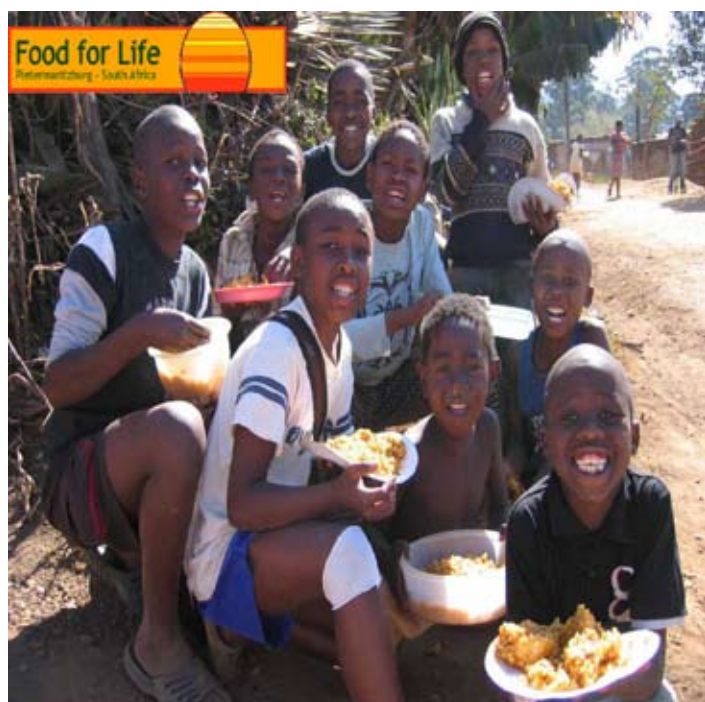
A deep blue clear sky beckoned with the promise of a fine day while devotees were toiling selflessly in the heat washing and preparing bhoga whilst others were adding ingredients or stirring the food cooking in the dekshas!

Revati Devi Dasi commenting on why she helps with Food for Life: "It was Srila Prabhupada's instruction and very close to his heart, so why not?" Gita Mala looked up after adding the salt to the biryani and added: "It is not easy Prabhu, but it takes organisation and intelligence to quote Srila Prabhupada. Reliable devotees like Bhakta Raj, Madhukanta, Bhakta Prevan, Ram Gopal Das and Bhakta Rajesh help to push or pull the heavy utensils".

Bhakta Prevan's answer to what is the purpose of Food for Life said: "The Food for Life project is an act of compassion whereby food is offered to Krishna and when eaten nourishes the body spiritually. By such action not only are past sinful reactions in the body vanquished, but the body becomes immunized to all contamination of material nature."

Shantipur Devi Dasi (while cooking the fragrantly rich halava) said with authority: "Prabhu, in 1972 Srila Prabhupada said 'no one within 10 miles of a centre should go hungry!'". Vraja-renu Dasi busy adding more sugar shared: "That is our driving force, we always make Srila Prabhupada's will our goal that is why we are a good team".

As Baladev Das prepared the Lord's dishes to offer the food, he explained that: "It was a regular family event for the stalwarts and wished that this service would catch on with other families". He also added: "This service returns immediate results when we see the joy on people's faces and hear sincere expressions of gratitude. That is why some of us keep on with the programme".



Vaisnava Calendar

3 Aug 2010	Tuesday	Srila Lokanatha Gosvami C18 Disappearance
6 Aug 2010	Friday	Fasting for Kamika Ekadasi (Break fast 06:36 - 10:13)
20 Aug 2010	Friday	Fasting for Pavitropana Ekadasi (Break fast 06:23 - 10:07) Radha Govinda Jhulana Yatra begins
21 Aug 2010	Saturday	Srila Rupa Goswami - Disappearance
24 Aug 2010	Tuesday	Jhulana Yatra ends Lord Balarama's Appearance Day Second month of Caturmasya begins (yogurt fast for one month)
25 Aug 2010	Wednesday	Srila Prabhupada's departure for the USA
2 Sept 2010	Thursday	Sri Krsna Janmastami: Appearance of Lord Sri Krsna
3 Sept 2010	Friday	Nandotsava Srila Prabhupada Appearance Day
4 Sept 2010	Saturday	Fasting for Annada Ekadasi (Break fast 06:05 - 09:58)
12 Sept 2010	Sunday	Srimati Sita Thakurani (Sri Advaita's consort) Appearance Day
18 Sept 2010	Saturday	Fasting for Parsva Ekadasi (Break fast 08:11 - 09:49) (Fast today for Vamanadeva)
19 Sept 2010	Sunday	Sri Vamana Dvadasi: Appearance of Lord Vamanadeva (Fasting is done the previous day) Srila Jiva Gosvami Appearance Day
20 Sept 2010	Monday	Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura Appearance Day
22 Sept 2010	Wednesday	Srila Haridasa Thakura Disappearance Day Last day of the second Caturmasya month
23 Sept 2010	Sunday	Acceptance of sannyasa by Srila Prabhupada Third month of Caturmasya begins (milk fast for one month)

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