



Newsletter ~ Vallabh Vidya Mandir ~



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An Expression...

The autumn months are full of festivals. From Navrati, Diwali, Eid, to Thanksgiving....we are blessed to welcome seasons, wear wonderful costumes, follow traditions and perform religious ceremonies. The ultimate benefit of a festival is a shared experience for those who participate.

Festivals reinforce the social bonds amongst the groups that celebrate them and show strength and solidarity to those outside this social group. Celebrating festivals is to share happiness with each other by forgetting our problems and differences

India is a rich land that has attracted invaders from central Europe and Asia who left their imprint on this land, its religion and its lifestyle over 40 centuries. As a result, today, India celebrates more festivals than any other country. Nonetheless, Indians are known to celebrate all the festivals with great fan fare and importance.

Festivals in India are determined by the solar and lunar positions

and they may fall in a different month each year.

Most of the festivals celebrate the victory of good over evil, light over darkness, and knowledge over ignorance, although the actual legends that go with each festival are different in different parts of India. Regardless of the mythological explanation one prefers for Diwali, what the festival of lights really stands for today is a reaffirmation of hope, a renewed commitment to friendship and goodwill, and a religiously sanctioned celebration of the simple - and some not so simple - joys of life.

Each festival has its religious importance and is glorious in its own way. In this modern time, often the religious and spiritual significance behind any festival is getting lost. It has become more commercial; more party centered rather than keeping its auspiciousness. As Dr. Deepak Kotecha mentioned in his book *Hindus Awake - Religion and hari-bhajan is very festive. But if Hari is taken out, and festivities are all that remain, then the significance*

is lost, and there is no spiritual or beneficial cultural purpose served.

To keep God and its auspiciousness in the festival, we must make a conscious effort to focus on the inner beauty of lord's creation, in our family members and people around us.

Worshipping the idol is good but worshipping the people in whom the Lord resides is the true religion. Teaching our children to see the inner beauty and not to worry about the material luxury is the true blessing we can give to the young ones.

Let us all celebrate Diwali, Eid, and Thanksgiving with this inner light and make our home/neighborhood luminous with love, compassion and care.

Phalguni Kikani

No Classes

**November 2nd, 2008
(Annakut)**

&

**November 30th, 2008
(Thanksgiving)**

Enjoy the Festivities!



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The March is On..

Each month I go through my collection of good write-ups and select the one I consider educational and /or inspirational. The main purpose of the educational program at VVM is to help our children build a good value system and help them learn valuable lessons. One can learn a lot from others experiences.

Strength in Weakness A 10-year-old boy decided to study judo despite the fact that he did not have a left arm. The boy was doing well, and yet even after six months of training the master had taught him only one move.

“Sensei,” the boy finally said, “Shouldn’t I be learning more moves?”

This is the only move you’ll ever need to know,” the sensei replied.

Not quite understanding, but believing in his teacher, the boy kept training. One day the sensei took the boy to his first tournament. Surprising himself, the boy went on to win every match

and reached the finals. His opponent was bigger, stronger and more experienced. Concerned that the boy might get hurt seriously, the referee was about to stop the match when the sensei intervened. Soon after the match resumed, boy’s opponent made a critical mistake – he dropped his guard. Instantly, the boy used his move to pin him. The boy had won the match and the tournament. On their way home, the boy and sensei reviewed the match.

Seniors Classes....

Free Classes for Seniors

Sundays at 10 AM

Taught by Dr Vyas

“Sensei, how did I win the tournament with only one move?” he asked.

“You won for two reasons,” the sensei answered, “first, you’ve almost mastered one of the most difficult throws in all of judo. And second, the only known defense

for that move is for your opponent to grab your left arm.”

We often feel that we have a shortcoming and indulge in self pity, but we never know when our drawback becomes our strength. Each of us is special and important, so live your life to its fullest and extract the best out of it. The key lies in turning your weakness into your strength.

Let me tell you the secret that has led me to my goal. My strength lies solely in my tenacity.

Louis Pasteur

Sureshbhai Patel

..Important

If you are not receiving my e-mail, please send an e-mail to

kikanis@earthlink.net

Phalguni Kikani

Special Thanks..

To Priti Parikh and all the volunteers for the wonderful success of VVM Annual Picnic



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From the little mouths..

Children in *Religion-2* (Ages 7-10) class got homework where they were asked what they like about our religion and what would they change in the world around them to make it better?

The answers came straight from their heart. Majority of the children love the number of Gods we have and how pretty they are dressed and the large number of festivals we have and of course the Garba!

On the subject of improving the world, there was a consensus that we need to reduce pollution, be nice to each other and no littering.

I hope we all follow the young one's advice and do our part in keeping our mandir clean.

Guruji's visit

Here are a few pictures of Pujya Sri Sri Vrajraj Kumarji's visit to VVM.

Enjoy!



