

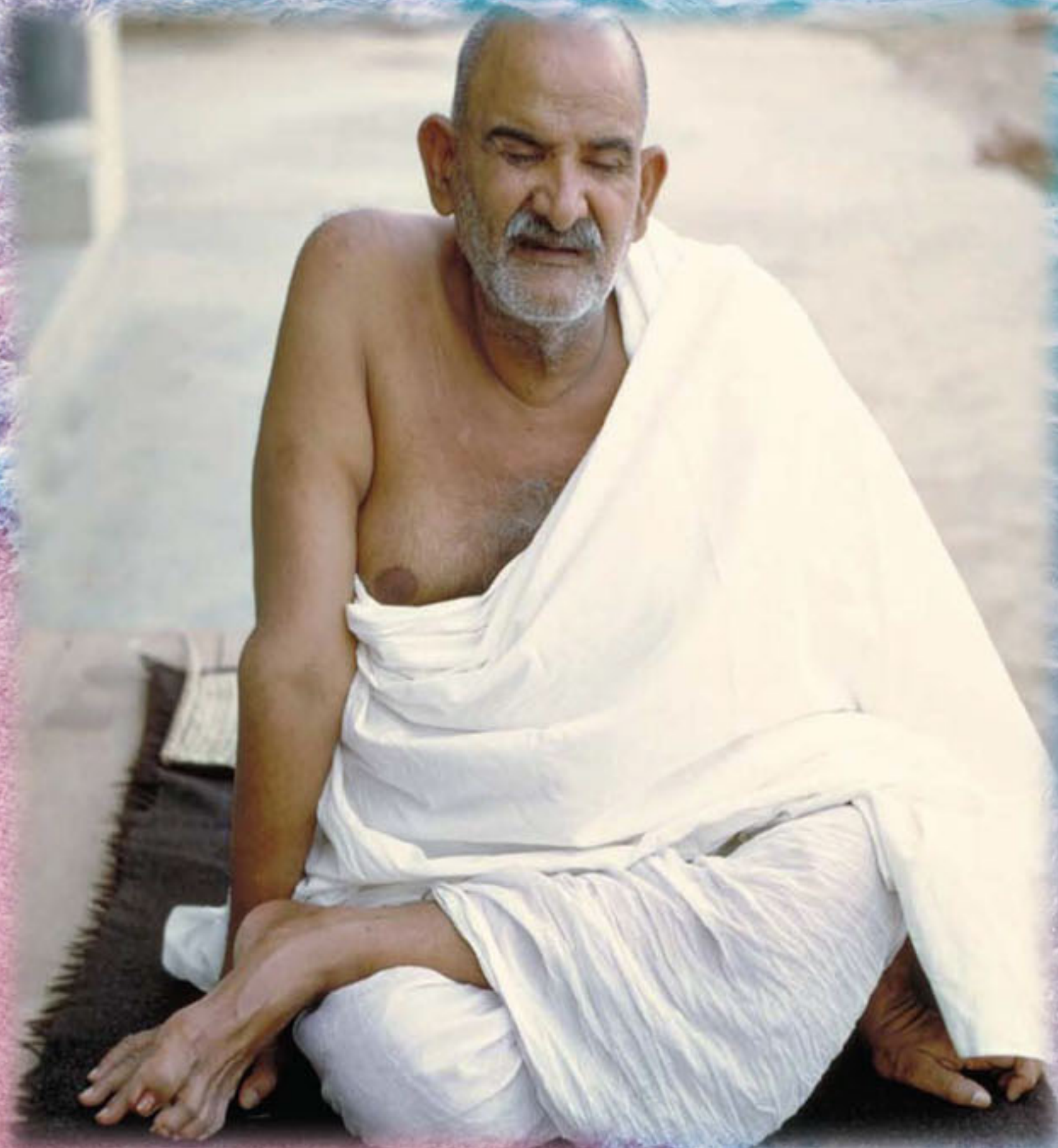


Neem Karoli Baba Ashram  
PO Box 1710  
Taos, NM 87571

# Neem Karoli Baba Ashram 2022 Annual Newsletter



*Walking Each Other Home*



*Love is the strongest  
medicine.  
~ Maharaj-ji*

## Ashram Update

Ram Ram,

By His Grace, all things are made possible by Love, and Maharaj-ji's Taos ashram continues to serve His and Hanuman-ji's devotees even through these difficult times.

As each week and month of the pandemic have passed, the lost chances to gather to chant in joy, to breathe and be still in love, to share devotion and prasad, as well as the lost opportunities to gather to mourn those we have lost, all at a time when it has been needed most, have been heavy on all our hearts. Deeply aware that the ashram provides an important anchor in people's lives, the ashram board and staff have grappled with the various ways to welcome satsang while adhering to mandates and safety protocols. Although we have been thwarted by Covid variants, we are making strides towards bringing about a return to the ashram's regular rhythms. As always, the ashram will adhere to state and local government health mandates, putting safety first, while making opening the ashram its highest priority.

Over the winter of 2020 and into the spring of 2021, we were able to offer satsang appointments for limited darshans of up to 15-minutes in the temple. In July, the ashram began opening the ashram for morning aarti followed by chai; darshan on Saturday afternoons; and Hanuman Chalisas and hot lunch prasada on Sundays.

The ashram's partial reopening has been met with great joy by satsang near and far. It has been poignant to witness heartfelt reunions among satsang sisters and brothers. It has also been very moving to witness the enthusiasm of caretakers and sevaks to serve satsang. Everyone is looking forward to when the ashram is fully open, and all the family can gather again.

Current ashram staff include veterans and newbies alike: Joe has been at the ashram upwards of seven years and has been kitchen manager for many of those years. Dylan Hanuman, who came to the ashram in 2017 as a camping farm sevak and left to formally study sustainable agriculture, is now the Farm Manager. Live-in staff include Tyler,

Meera, Ganesh Das and Nick. Caretakers who have joined the staff while the ashram has been closed are now gradually getting to know more of Baba's family. Tara is the Office Manager and Anushri is the Puja Dukan Manager with the help of Rosalie. A core group of satsang has served as sevaks during the pandemic and we look forward to seeing many devotees helping as the ashram opens more and more. The ashram extends deep heartfelt thanks to Meem for overseeing significant growth of the puja dukan, and thanks previous Farm Manager Gwen and caretaker Bowen for their service as well.

Daily life at the ashram revolves primarily around puja, grounds maintenance, special projects and welcoming satsang during darshan hours. Morning and evening aartis are held at 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. The aartis, as well as Saturday darshan and Sunday Hanuman Chalisas with midday aarti, are live streamed via the website and on Facebook. Additional pujas that take place each week include Shiva puja on Mondays, Hanuman-ji puja on Tuesdays, Guru puja on

Thursdays, Devi puja on Fridays, and Chota Hanuman puja on Saturdays. Ashram staff and local satsang are trained to conduct the pujas and are generous and joyful in sharing puja responsibilities, including making prasada packets for satsang to take during darshan.

Festival pujas have included as many devotees as has been safe at the given time. It is always the ashram's intent to enable as many devotees as possible to participate in all the festival activities. For Guru Purnima and Bhandara we were able to open to all who were able to come chant Maha Mantra and Hanuman Chalisas. One of the things that made this possible was creating an outdoor puja with Maharaj-ji's takht and photo placed on the back porch of the temple. Although the traditional festival bhandaras and other activities were greatly missed, by His Grace, prasada to-go was served and

received with love. In addition to observing the festival pujas, we also remembered Beloveds who have left this realm. We celebrated Maharaj-ji's birth and observed the anniversaries of passings of Sri Pujniya Siddhi Ma and Ram Dass Baba.

Now we look towards the future. We are hopeful that advances in the pandemic will allow us to return to pre-Covid activities in all ways. Spring will bring the annual ashram camping season and with it very exciting plans for the farm.

### **Farm Sustainability Project**

The ashram has contracted with the esteemed Golden Stupa Ecodesign of Santa Fe to design and implement a comprehensive plan for increasing the farm's productivity and sustainability. Dylan, the Farm Manager, is studying for his master's degree in Regenerative Organic Agriculture through Maharishi International University, and

with the help of Jacob from the Golden Stupa design team and a new Farm Manager Assistant, the project will serve as his master's thesis. The plan is very broad in scope, with the first phase consisting of assessing, strategizing and planning to address such needs as water retention and overflow, the most productive species of plants to grow in the various eco-climates on the ashram property, planning for potential new greenhouses and biospheres, food processing and storage and partnering with other local farms to distribute fresh produce to those in need in Taos County. New Mexico ranks eighth in the U.S. in overall food insecurity and third in child food insecurity (not knowing where the next meal is coming from). The ashram's commitment to this work is a reflection of Maharaj-ji's love of all people as He said, "Feed Everyone" and "God comes to the poor in the form of food."

### **New Steel Storage Shed**

Among the many practical issues of maintaining the ashram

grounds, having secure, weatherproof storage space has been a challenge for the past number of years. The board has made the installation of a new 30x35-foot steel shed in place of the previous shed a priority for spring 2022. The shed will be used to store festival supplies, Puja Dukan inventory, office supplies, as well as general ashram storage. The space will also provide an area to set up a wood workshop and the roof will be home to a solar array to help power the mandir.

### **Mother's Garden and Shrine**

A memorial garden with pathways and lots of flowers will be developed around the pond in Sri Pujniya Siddhi Ma's honor. Designs for the shrine are still in process; it will be a small gazebo-like structure, approximately 12 feet in diameter. A rose quartz carving of Sri Siddhi Ma's feet sitting upon a lotus will be installed on an altar in the center of the shrine. The shrine will also feature photos of both Sri Siddhi Ma and Sri Jivanti Ma on the walls as well as benches for quiet contemplation and remembrance.

### **Taos Interfaith Medical Debt Relief**

By His Grace, in November and December of 2021, we collected over \$20,000 for medical debt relief for Taos residents. Along with other local faith-based organizations, we were able to provide forgiveness of medical debt for 3,490 Taos families and individuals. Thank you to our satsang for generously donating to this worthy cause.

### **Hopes for the Future**

It is our prayer that the ashram continues to reflect Maharaj-ji's teachings and serve the satsang with love and devotion. We fervently hope that we will return to opening fully very soon. We pray that

all who come to His ashram in Taos find the peace and refuge that they may be seeking, and that the ashram fills not only people's bellies but also their hearts and souls.

*May we all trust in the moment, in Baba, and in His grace and love.*

In love and service,  
Hanuman das  
Ashram President and General Manager



**Sri Siddhi Ma**

## Excerpt from *Love Everyone*

by Parvati Markus

“All the Money in the World” ~ RamRani Rosser

One of my favorite Maharajji stories happened soon after. I hadn't had much money in India; then my sister sent \$400 to me in Delhi. I cashed \$100 on my way to Vrindavan. I still had \$300 worth of \$20 traveler's checks (fifteen checks) that I put in a plastic envelope and stuck down in the bottom of my embroidered sadhu bag.

When I got to Kainchi, I rented a kutir down by the farm. Now and then I went to Nainital to cash another check or two. Never looked in that envelope, never counted, just took a few checks out and cashed them when needed. Finally I figured there must be only two or three checks left. I went to the State Bank in India in Nainital to change money. I pulled out that plastic envelope that I hadn't actually looked inside of for all those months. I counted the traveler's checks on the polished wooden counter, and there were fifteen checks – \$300 worth! I knew I had started with \$400. I changed \$100 in Delhi and then I had been cashing checks for all those months. How could this be? I must have looked shocked.

The gentleman at the bank said, “What's the matter? Did you lose some money?”

I felt the earth shake in that old Colonial-era wooden building. I said, “Could you count these for me, please?”

“It's \$300. How much would you like to cash?”

“All of it.”



I had a big wad of rupees in my bag when I returned to Kainchi on the bus. Maharajji didn't always give afternoon darshan, but he was out on his tukhat. As I walked across the courtyard he shouted, “*Kya, RamRani, paisa mil gaya?*” Which means, “What, RamRani, did you get your money?” I didn't tell many people about it. I was a little paranoid that American Express might investigate Baba!

It's now been over forty years since I met Maharajji. All in all, it's been a really wonderful trip on his magic blanket, and Baba is everywhere – the whole world is plaid!

# Rebuilding Vavaniya Dham

Among the many sacred Hanuman temples built by Maharaj-ji, Vavania, near Morbi in Gujarat, stands as the first. Located in an enchanting area on the edge of a lake and only three or four kilometers from the Arabian Sea, Vavaniya Dham had fallen into serious disrepair due to the passing of time and the harsh elements of sea salt and wind. It was slowly crumbling and turning into dust. Yet for decades, this temple has been an important *teerth sthali* (pilgrimage site) for devotees. An inspired group of devotees determined to save and rebuild this precious place of Maharaj-ji's legacy.



Original Vavaniya Temple

By His Grace, on October 17, 2020, devotees gathered from various parts of India to perform a Bhoomi Havan with Hanuman Chalisas and recitation of the Sundarkaand, followed by a bhandra. Additional pujas and bhandaras have been held since then, including singing 1,008 Hanuman Chalisas in October 2021.



Vavaniya Hawan

On May 20, 2021, approximately one million Rams written by devotees were embedded into the temple's foundation.

The original Hanuman murti will be retained and another will also be consecrated in the mandir. The temple complex will be expanded from 3,000 square feet to 27,000 square feet and will house two mandirs, one of Maharaj-ji and one of Hanuman-ji.



*New Construction*

The type and quality of material used in the construction have been of the utmost importance. The mandirs are being constructed with Dhrangadhra. In Sanskrit 'dhrang' means a stone and 'dhara' means the Earth. Dhrangadhra sandstone, pinkish in color, has excellent compressive strength and hardness, which results in its long life. It has been used in many architectural marvels in India since the 11<sup>th</sup> century.



*Vavaniya Stone*

The rendering (below) shows the temple complex as well as the Yagshala for havans and other rituals. There will be a dharamsala with 18

rooms and six halls, including a kitchen and dining halls, an office and an ashram store. The complex will also feature a ghat – the stairs approaching the lake.



Devotees can follow the progress on Facebook:

[https://www.facebook.com/NeebKarauriBaba/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/NeebKarauriBaba/?ref=page_internal)

On Instagram:

[https://www.instagram.com/vavaniya\\_hanumanji/](https://www.instagram.com/vavaniya_hanumanji/)

For information on how to contribute to this seva please contact [contact@vavaniyahanumanji.com](mailto:contact@vavaniyahanumanji.com)

## *"Feed Everyone": The Ashram Partners with St. James Church Food Pantry Ministries*

Over the past year, the Taos ashram began a partnership with the St. James Church Food Pantry Ministries program. The ashram purchases \$1,000 worth of organic fresh produce each month and donates it to the St. James program. The partnership began because the ashram staff and directors wanted to remain active in feeding people even during this time of Covid when the ashram has either been closed or is open for limited darshan hours. Maharaj-ji's teaching to "Love Everyone, Feed Everyone" has been a core guiding principal at the Ashram since its inception.



The St. James Food Pantry Ministries Director is satsang member David Hines. David shares: "Maharaj-ji got me the job as director of the St. James Food Pantry!" Previously he had been the delivery driver, but after getting married last year, he was conversing with Maharaj-ji about needing a "real job." Two days later, he was in

the hall at St. James wearing his orange Taos Hanuman T-shirt and carrying a large tray of food. When the deacon of the church saw him in the shirt, she heard Maharaj-ji's voice inside her consciousness whisper, "Love Everyone, Feed Everyone." The deacon immediately stopped David and asked if he wanted to apply for the newly created leadership position at their food pantry. "I knew right away that this was Baba's Grace," says David.

The St. James food pantry began around forty years ago with a small shelf of free dry goods at the back of the parish hall and has grown into the largest food pantry in northern New Mexico, feeding five percent of the total population of Taos County (1,500 people during the height of Covid). Thursdays are 'food distribution day' at St. James, where 275-300 families receive basic staples including dry goods, canned items, and USDA surplus items such as meat and dairy products. On Fridays, approximately thirty families receive a home delivery of food items from the program. The program is supported entirely by

donations, including donations of time and effort by those who help organize and distribute the food. David says, "Nobody is turned away for any reason."

David has received many words of gratitude from the families who enjoy the organic fresh produce the ashram donates. He believes the Church's partnership with the ashram not only provides families with highly nutritious fresh items; it also makes a tangible, energetic difference in how people feel about what the program is offering them.

David has plans to expand the St. James program with a new large underground greenhouse as well as a community garden project. For more information or to donate directly to the St. James food pantry go to [www.stjamestaos.com](http://www.stjamestaos.com).





# Sri Dharam Narayan Sharma

Sri Dharam Narayan Sharma (Babu), younger son of Maharaj-ji, was born in Akbarpur village, Firozabad district, on October 12, 1937 - Hindi date Ashtami - the same as Maharaj-ji. This happy synchronization seemed to augur well for the great future of the child born that day to Sri Laxmi Narayan Sharma (Maharaj-ji) and Smt. Rambeti. The one remarkable thing about him then observed was the extraordinary luster of his eyes.

Although he was not fond of schools and books, his intelligence even as a student was of high order. He was a good conversationalist and inherited from his father an unequalled sense of wit and humor. He would raise roars of laughter in his listeners by the unique manner in which he related incidents from his own life and observations.

He joined the service in 1955 in the Forest department and continued it until retirement. In February 1957. He was married to Kusum Devi, daughter of wealthy Zamindar Sri Harprasad and Smt. Bhagwan Devi of the village Basai Tundla.

In 1973, when Maharaj-ji left his body at Vrindavan Ashram, Babu was with him; in fact, Maharaj-ji took him from Agra, asking him to accompany himself. He never revealed anything about this last meeting with his father (Maharaj-ji).

Slowly and imperceptibly external circumstances were helping. At the age of nearly 45 he was blessed with a new vision: he slowly started to take interest in ashram affairs. After his retirement he devoted himself wholly for the cause of Maharaj-ji's teachings. Under his guidance and broad vision, several development projects and welfare activities were started to serve Maharaj-ji's teaching - Love All, Serve All and Feed All. Under his guidance a beautiful Gaushala (cow shelter) was opened at



Vrindavan Ashram (Mahasamadhi Sthal), which still serves the purpose of Gau Sea (lovingly caring for cows).

Though it was started in a humble way, the ashrams (Vrindavan, Delhi, Akbarpur and Neebkarori) have considerably expanded over the years. Vrindavan Ashram has been a very powerful spiritual beacon and thousands of devotees have visited it every month, carrying home with them the torch of light, love and service lit at the Feet of Maharaj-ji.

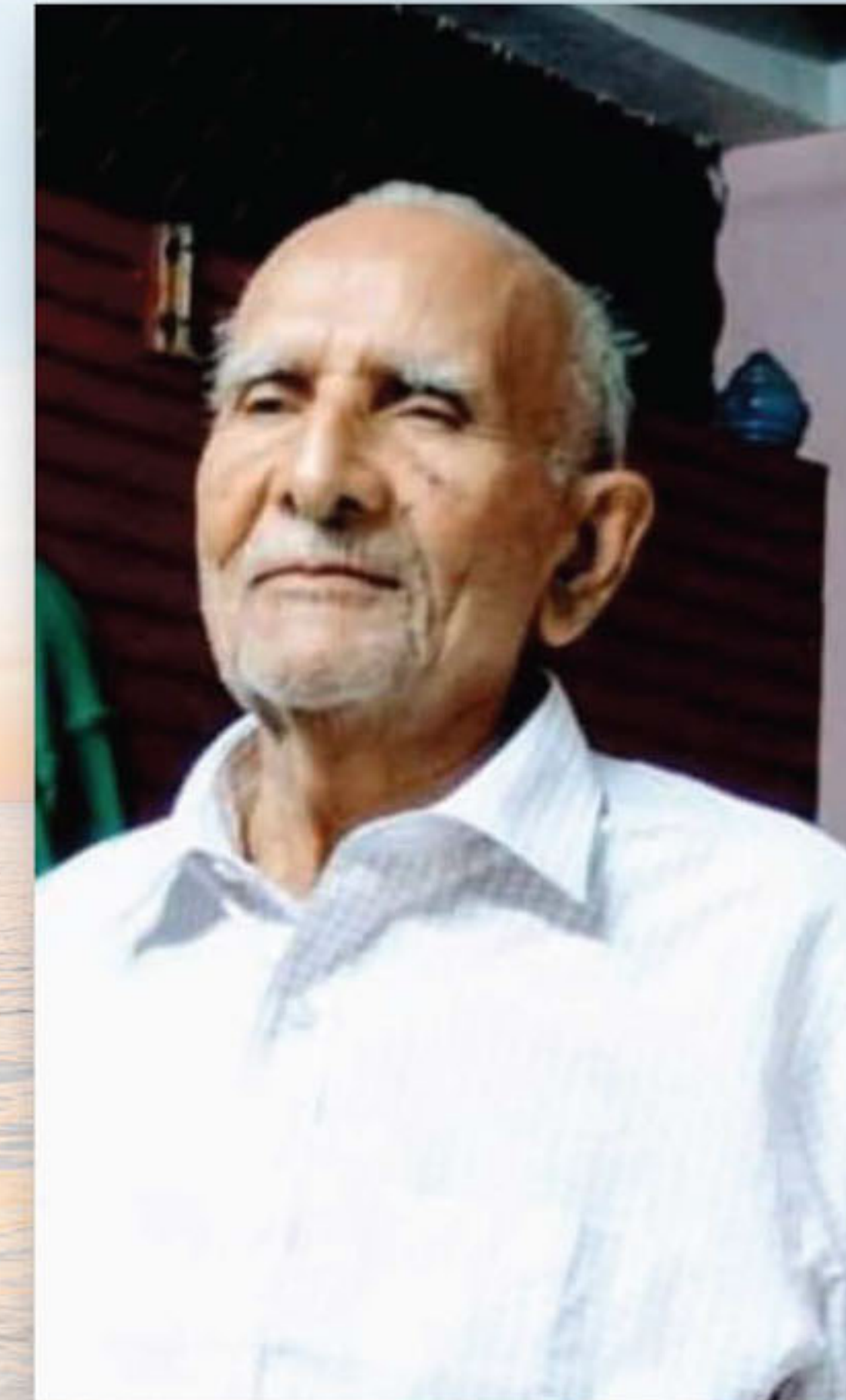
Sri Dharam Narayan Sharma, lovingly called Babu, Babuji, Guruji, Bhaiya, left us on April 26, 2021. He is survived by his six daughters and nine grandchildren. Though not present in his flesh, his work divine goes on as he continues to inspire and guide this entire Maharaj-ji community and earnest aspirants wherever they are.  
Jai gurudev.

~ Devendra Kumar Sharma

# *Sri Aneg Singh Sharma*

Aneg, the oldest son of Sri Neem Karoli Baba Maharaj was born on July 21, 1926 (Duesohni Ekadashi) in village Akbarpur, Dist. Firozabad in a Zamidar family with a humble background. His father, the late Sri Laxmi Narayan Sharma, is a great saint popularly known as Baba Neeb Karori, widely revered world over. Aneg learned his lessons of spiritualism from his father and imbibed his father's ideals and virtues from the very beginning. He attended a government school in Firozabad and did his postgraduate in History at St. John's College, Agra. He was married to Smt. Urmila Sharma and had two children, Dr. Dhananjay Sharma and Shashi Sharma. He became translator in Madhya Bharat, as it was known then and was promoted to Under Secretary when Madhya Pradesh was formed. He retired as Deputy secretary in 1986. After retirement, he devoted his life to religious and philanthropic activities. He refurbished the Baba Neeb Karori Mandir in Vrindavan for the pilgrims coming to pay obeisance to Baba. In addition, he took an active interest in the building of a temple at Jabalpur on the Narmada River and built the temple at Akbarpur where Baba Neeb Karori Maharaj was born. Aneg also provided guidance to the management of Kainchi temple, Rishikesh temple and a host of others.

At the age of 96, he unfortunately fell and hurt himself grievously and was hospitalized for three months until his death. Aneg left for the Heavenly Abode on November 21, 2021, and his last rites were conducted by his son Dr. Dhananjay Sharma in Bhopal.



Lives are like rivers: eventually they go where they must. Not where we want them to. We all will cherish his ideals forever. We will ceaselessly pursue his footprints on the sands of time.

~ Dr. Dhananjay Sharma, son of late Aneg Singh Sharma

# *RamRani*

## *Yvette Claire Rosser*

My mother, RamRani, was born Yvette Claire Rosser on January 31, 1952, in Abilene, TX, the second of three daughters of Felix Hoyt Rosser, a Texan businessman and WWII hero, and Dr. Janine Smets Randal, a professor of French, German and philosophy, originally from Belgium.

All of her life my mother had an exuberant smile and an infectious laugh. She was generous and kind and easy to be yourself around. In fact, she demanded your authenticity. She was unafraid to be thoroughly herself, and so you should, too. She was brilliant and inquisitive, always the enthusiastic student and teacher. Humanity was her pupil. She was a committed social justice and peace activist and worked to make the world a better place for the underprivileged and underserved. And, she was a brilliant storyteller. Oh, the adventures she'd had and stories she could tell!

After traveling overland from Belgium to Afghanistan, my mother traveled to India on Christmas Day of 1970, smuggling a puppy through the border. She brought the puppy to Goa and there discovered Goenka and Vipassana Meditation.

In early 1973, after having lived in India and traveled around the subcontinent, meeting friends and lovers, and sometimes losing them, she met Neem Karoli Baba who gave her the name RamRani, "meri RamRani" (my RamRani) He called her. He told her to return to the United States and go to school to teach about India and make it better understood in the west. So, that is what she did.

Famed Indian author and literary scholar, Raja Rao, said in his letter of recommendation for her grad school application that of all his thousands of students, she had understood India the best.



While attending the University of Texas at Austin, she met my father, Frank Siebenaler. They had children and she became a teacher of social studies and English. They were divorced in 1990 and we moved to Taos to be near the ashram. In 1992, she returned to India for the first time in 17 years, taking me with her. After that she returned to India every year or so, taking my brothers with her, as well. The following year, she began graduate school at the University of Texas at Austin, working toward her Master's in Asian Studies and her PhD in Curriculum and Instruction. It would take years of research and traveling all over India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh to successfully defend her dissertation, but finally in August 2003, she received her PhD.

Just three weeks later, on September 11, 2003, the 30th anniversary of Maharajji's Mahasamadhi, she was in a terrible car accident. No one should have survived the crash, but RamRani attributed her survival and that of her sons to Maharajji's grace. Window glass sliced open around her entire head as the car rolled four times, but she said that Maharajji held her face in his hands, which was unscathed. And, her recovery was nothing short of miraculous.

In March 2014, she moved to India full-time to work on her book, which will be published posthumously.

As Makarand R. Paranjape said in his recent New Indian Express article about her life, published December 2, 2021: "She was large, garrulous, funny, irreverent and irrepressible. A very strange sort of academic at first glance being so open, frank and earthy, I began to see how she had a very sharp and clear mind and was widely read."

She once told me the story of an Indian woman who spoke no English, pointed at her and shouted, "Big brain lady!" She had an even bigger heart and she will be greatly missed.

RamRani died on November 20, 2021, in Haldwani, Uttarakhand India. She was cremated on the ghats at Jageshwar Dham, next to 2,500-year-old Shiva temples, as was her wish. She is survived by her younger sister, Danielle Rosser, her three children Krystina Shakti Siebenaler, Jai Hanuman Siebenaler and his partner, Ashley, and Amar Josef Siebenaler and his wife, Sarah, and her grandson, Samson Siebenaler.

I plan to make a documentary film about my mother, her story, the lives she touched, and how she attributed all of it to Maharajji's grace. It will be called मेरी राम रानी (*My RamRani*). Be on the lookout for a GoFundMe to raise the initial funds for the film. If you would like to participate and tell your story of RamRani in an interview for the film, please email me at [kiki.love productions@gmail.com](mailto:kiki.love productions@gmail.com).

राम राम

Krystina Shakti Siebenaler



# Sharad Tewari

by Krishna Das

Sharad Tewari was the oldest son of the late Mr. and Mrs. K.C. Tewari. His younger brother, Neelu (N.C) and younger sister Minoo, are still with us. As the oldest son, Sharad was taught many pujas and prayers by his father, who was a great yogi. He learned to recite the complete Rudram.



His father requested that, after he passed, Sharad should do the Rudram every day for a year and offer water to his father. He was also to fast throughout the day until this was completed. As he worked in the Uttaranchal Government Electric Organization, he often could not eat until late in the night, after he completed the puja.

We used to sit for hours and talk about spiritual subjects. He knew so many things about spirituality and yoga. One day, when Sharad and his brother were acting up, Mrs. Tewari went to Maharaj-ji to ask Him to help control the boys. Maharaj-ji told her, "You don't understand who they are. They are the right and left hand of the Goddess. Let them be. They will be all right."

I traveled a lot with Sharad throughout the Kumaon Hills. Everywhere we went he was greeted by the locals with much love and respect. He treated me as his older brother, with so much love and affection. I miss him dearly every day.

# Yamuna Jo Anne Baughan

It is with deep sadness that we share the news of the passing of our guru sister Yamuna Jo Anne Baughan. Mother called her home on December 1, 2021. She is survived by Ganga Marlene Roeder, her soul-partner for sixty-seven years. They met as undergraduates at the University of Chicago and journeyed together from there through an eclectic grab bag of jobs that took them from coast to coast.

For the last two decades of their careers, Ganga and Yamuna went to work with Ram Dass, first as volunteers in Massachusetts and then as his assistants in California. They were with him through his stroke and its aftermath. When Ram Dass moved to Maui, they began spending most of each year in India, much of the time in Kainchi and Rishikesh at the feet of Sri Siddhi Ma. It was Mother who gave them their Hindi names, saying, "You are Ganga and Yamuna, two rivers flowing together forever." Ganga says that those words are now her lifeline. "Mother said, 'forever.' That means that even now, when I so ache for her sweet presence, I know Yamuna's spirit remains with me."



Yamuna was cremated on December 6, 2021, and her ashes will be scattered in various places here in the United States and in India.

## Sara Morgan

Beloved sister Sara Morgan passed from this plane of existence on March 20, 2020. Sara was a true friend and example to many through her absolute dedication to awakening. Mother, sister, lover, teacher, grandmother and fellow seeker, Sara walked the path with grace, beauty, and certainty. When you were in Sara's presence you were embraced in a light of brilliant friendship. She knew in her bones that Truth was brighter than any of us could imagine.

Sara was an early student of Ram Dass and Samuel Lewis. She made the entirety of this earth her home and never settled for an easy answer. There was no path that could not accommodate her beauty. Sara was a forever "Lama Bean," raised a beautiful son Hamza, had grandchildren, and shared her light for many years as a mental health therapist. She was one of the first teachers of Dances of Universal Peace and had a genuine thirst for Dharma.

In 1995, Sara was diagnosed with ovarian cancer and beat all odds by the sheer ferocity of her heart. Giving up was never an option but giving in to the truth was her forever teacher. Her life path was to die before her day of death came.

And, in her presence you also died, and became reborn again and again into the eternal truth and universal love.



## Ashoka Didi



Beloved Ashoka Didi was enjoined into Maharaj-ji's loving arms on October 17, 2021. The younger sister of Mrs. Kamala "Didi" Mukerjee, she was also known as Putu Di. Greatly loved by all who knew her, Ashoka Didi took charge of 4 Church Lane in Allahabad after Dada and Didi's passing. We are forever grateful to Ashoka Didi for helping to ensure the legacy of the fabled home continues for generations to come.

# Asha Greer

Asha Greer, cofounder of Lama Foundation in the mountains north of Taos, died on January 7 at the age of 86 near Charlottesville, Virginia, where she had been living since leaving Lama with her four daughters in 1979. Her passing was peaceful and joyous. She was surrounded by a large and loving family that included her children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews, and a close circle of friends and students. Asha had a profound influence on entire generation of spiritual seekers. Her presence was powerful yet peaceful, her insights original and penetrating, her humility all-pervading and her devotion complete.

Asha was an ordained murshida in the Sufi Ruhaniat International Order and a lifelong friend of Ram Dass, who she met as an undergraduate at Stanford. In his posthumously published memoir, *Being Ram Dass*, he tells the story of visioning an ideal spiritual community with Asha and her then-husband Nooruddeen Durkee in the mid-1960s, which came into manifestation as Lama, the place where Ram Dass gave his first retreat soon after returning from India and where *Be Here Now* was created with the Lama community in 1971.

Asha was also a lifelong student and teacher of Chado, Japanese Tea Ceremony, which she wove into her teachings of meditation and Sufi practice. She was a hospice nurse, an artist, and a gardener. When Asha woke from the operation for her brain tumor last year, she was in a state of profound love for all beings and all things, which she recognized as the true nature of the universe and God. She remained in this exalted state of *being love* for the remainder of her days. For more about Asha and to view her artwork, visit <https://www.asha-greer.com>



# Bhabi Champa Sah

Asha Greer, cofounder of Lama Foundation in the mountains north of Taos, died on January 7 at the age of 86 near Charlottesville, Virginia, where she had been living since leaving Lama with her four daughters in 1979. Her passing was peaceful and joyous. She was surrounded by a large and loving family that included her children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews, and a close circle of friends and students. Asha had a profound influence on entire generation of spiritual seekers. Her presence was powerful yet peaceful, her insights original and penetrating, her humility all-pervading and her devotion complete.

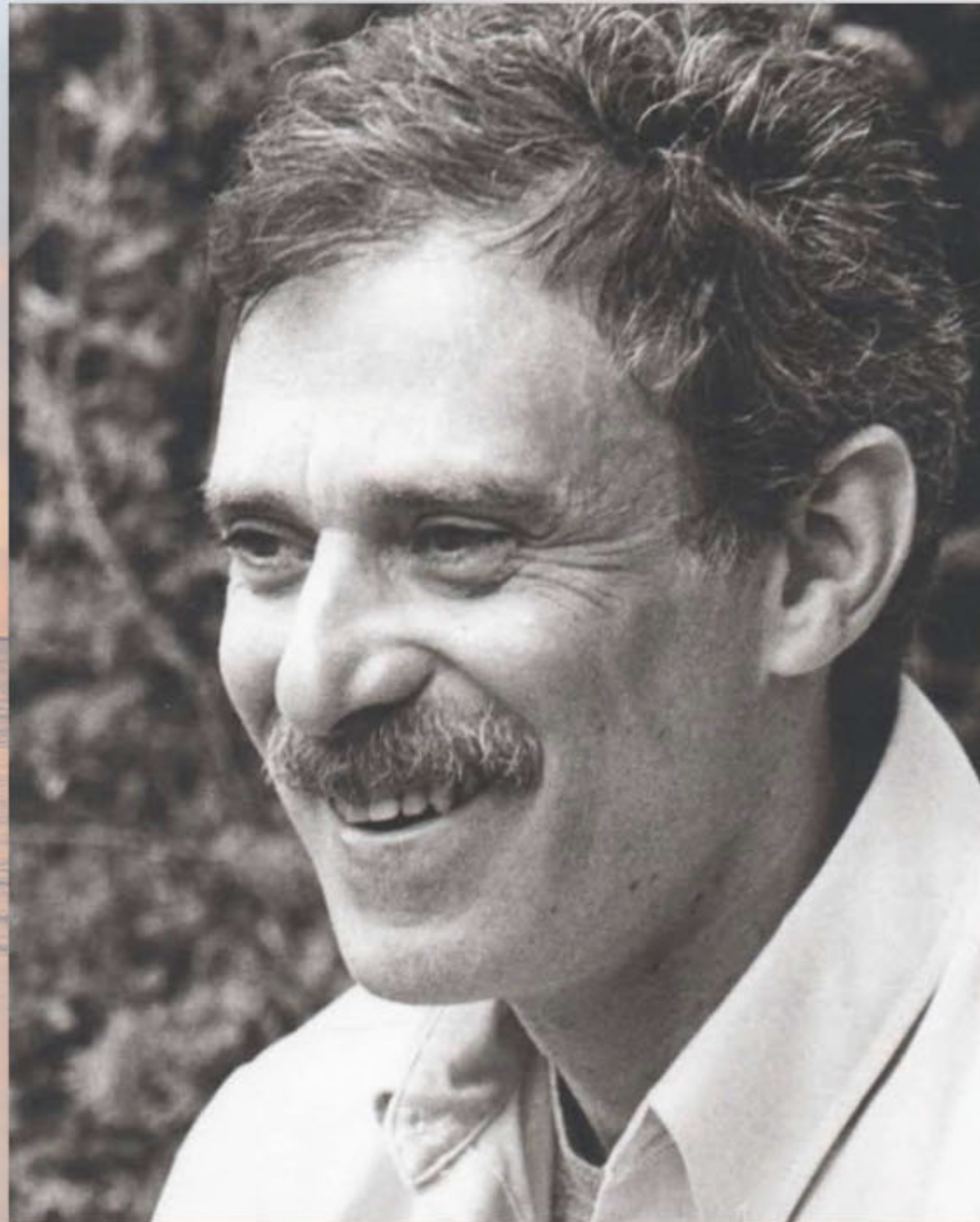
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# Gopal Ram



Gopal Ram Robert Bodenstein took his last breath at 4:55 p.m. India time on December 4, 2021. He was 80 years old. Born in 1941 in Brooklyn, New York, Gopal Ram was an only child. He went to college and received a degree in fine arts. He had a passion for art and delighted us all by his computer-generated illustrations filled with Hanumans, Neem Karoli Baba and sacred icons.

Most of us met him in the mid seventies and found out after much coaxing that he had been in the army and had also spent time on Madison Ave. as a graphic artist, both of which (his own words) gave him "an early demise." In deep despair, he read "*Be Here Now*" which sent him on a spiritual journey that never ended.

Gopal had a love affair with Hanuman. Many of us remember him eyes closed, ektar in hand, singing 108 Hanuman Chalisas and Banke Biharis. In his love for the Hanuman Chalisa, he figured out how to sing 108 Chalisas every day. He fondly called them "Bullet Chalisas. Many then took up the practice.

Gopal lived in India for 30 years. His love of Maharaj-ji brought him there. He spent time in the 1980's at the Neem Karoli Ashram in Kainchi and traveled with Siddhi Ma, Tiwari and KK. They were beloved mentors for him. In 1990, Gopal moved to Lucknow to attend satsang with H.W.L. Poonja. He loved the teachings of Ramana Maharishi and Advaita. In 1995, he rented a simple house at the base of the holy mountain Arunachala in Tiruvannamalai. His home was surrounded by rice paddies, flowers, and slithering cobras. From his front porch, Gopal fell in love with the mountain.

Gopal Ram had a wicked sense of humor which always surprised and disarmed us in its straight-faced delivery. He was known for his quick wit, beautiful, sweet smile, and his kind compassionate nature. So many will miss him.

"Having polished the mirror of my heart with the dust of my Guru's feet."

~Sri Hanuman Chalisa

# Theresa Klebert

Theresa Klebert was born July 1, 1963. She grew up in the Bronx, NY before attending the State University of New York at New Paltz. Theresa was a theater arts major and an incredible director, producer and actress. Theresa and I met in 1984 while working on a production of *Pippin* in our theater arts department. We became fast and furious friends during our decadent years in college. After leaving school, we continued our friendship. Eventually, she was introduced to Jam Bavan, a longtime devotee of Neem Karoli Baba.

In 1996, she moved to Boulder, Colorado and attended her first Mahasamadhi Bhandara at the ashram. Theresa became a devotee of Maharaj-ji and was vigilant in her daily practice, reciting mantras and singing kirtan regularly. Her faith in Maharaj-ji's Grace helped anchor her in troubled times, of which there were many. The last few years involved many losses for Theresa, however, she sought to meet them with courage and fortitude.

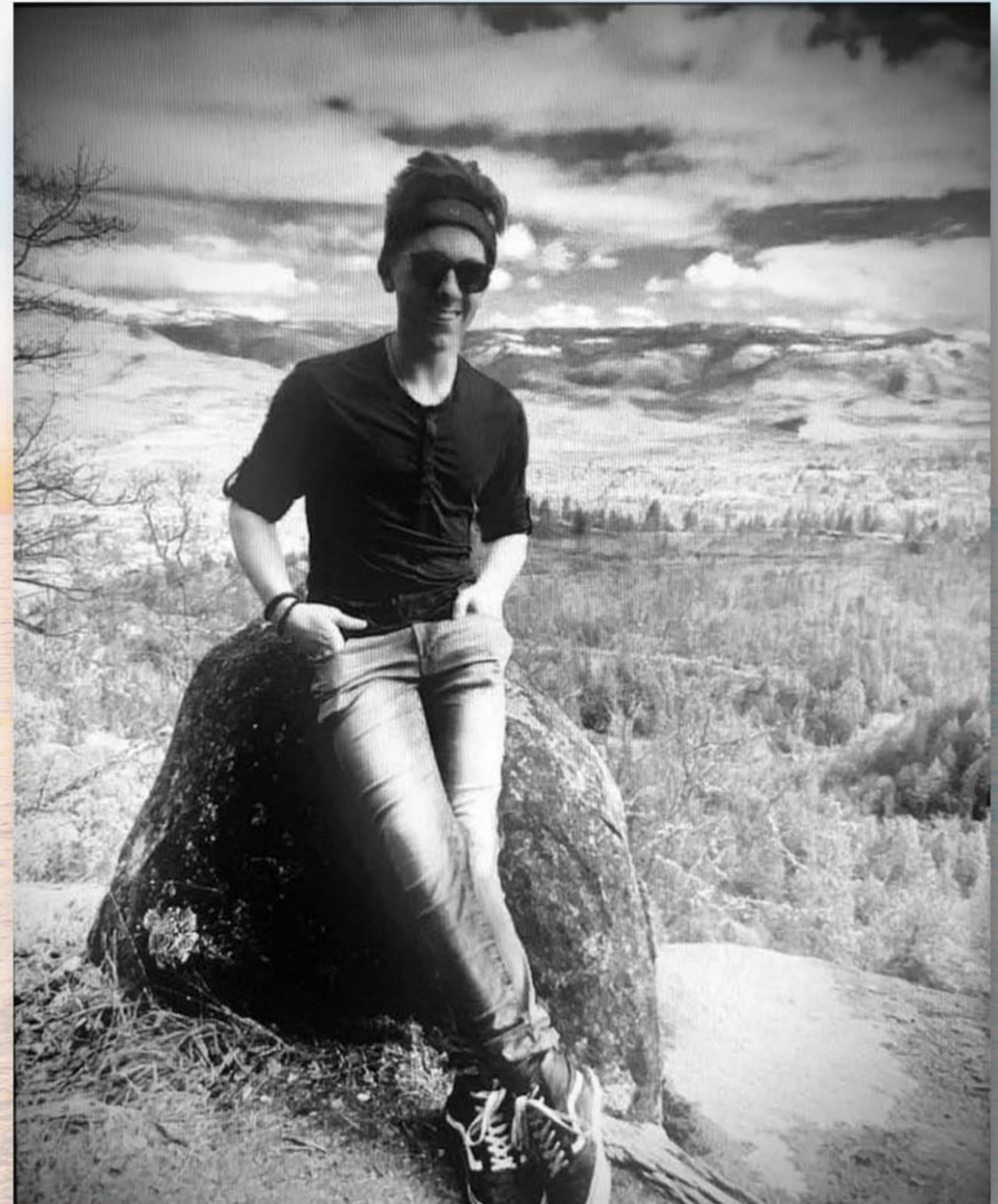
She leaves behind her family in the Northeast, a large international group of friends from her theater days, and many friends from her years living in Colorado and satsang in Taos. With her infectious laugh and huge heart, Theresa devoted the last twenty years to seva [selfless service] through her work with the elderly. She helped more than 108 people pass into the next realm with conscious love and grace. May Theresa receive the gift that she has given to so many now as she has passed from this world to the next by Maharaj-ji's Grace. Godspeed and Ram Ram.  
~ Lauren Thompson



# Kai Dakota

Kai Dakota was welcomed into the world through a home water birth, on the shoreline of Rhode Island one stormy fall day. He spent time in New England before moving to the Southwest, the Pacific Northwest, and back to the Southwest. He thoroughly enjoyed and showed appreciation for all the family road trips, where he spent time discovering countless national parks and museums. Kai had seen all of the Canadian provinces and nearly all of the States prior to his passing. He once told me in his early teen years that everything he learned was from our travels. He was an avid reader and learner, graduated high school a year early, and was accepted into numerous engineering schools where he intended to study Computer Science (BS) and Cybersecurity (MS). His mind was nothing short of brilliant and he had a knack for figuring things out and finding creative solutions. You would always find Kai in nature; the ocean, mountains, rivers, lakes, forests, and hot springs. He had such a keen survivalist instinct and felt most at home in nature. Kai had a genuine heart of gold; he was kind, thoughtful, courageous, compassionate, and a great listener. He took on the role of advocate for many in his later years. Kai was also a great teacher, father-like figure, and best friend to his three younger siblings, who have always looked up to him. As his mother, I was fortunate to experience the evolution of our relationship from parent-child into treasured friendship over the years; he became a dear friend to me as well. Kai's sudden and tragic passing is something the family will continue to learn to integrate into our lives. We find comfort feeling his presence from the spirit world, although we deeply miss him being here with us in body. We hold gratitude that he chose us as his family and we acknowledge that we are forever connected, across all of the time and space.

*"Wherever a beautiful soul has been there is a trail of beautiful memories." (author unknown)*



# Conscious Dying

By Ram Dev

As long as we think we are only our body and our mind, dying most certainly is a bad situation. We are, however, two-fold beings, human/divine, relative/absolute, imperfect/perfect, at one and the same time. Since we are losing our body and our mind in the dying process, the spiritual or soul dimension that each of us fundamentally is becomes crucial. When the physical and psychological needs of the dying person are met to the extent that they are no longer overwhelming, dying becomes a great spiritual opportunity. Though death is finally beginning to be talked about, it still remains the topic that carries our culture's most unconscious fear, and hence holds the potential for the most profound collective transformation.

Forty years ago, Ram Dass invited Stephen Levine, a poet and meditation teacher, to begin a project that would explore, put into practice, and teach the possibility of making the dying experience a conscious act, a spiritual opportunity. Stephen founded the Dying Project in Santa Cruz, California. This was the first organization in the West whose mission was to promote conscious dying. It soon became clear to Ram Dass and me that Stephen's project was the most compelling work being done in the Hanuman Foundation and we joined him in teaching workshops and in-service trainings around the country. After a couple of years of this teaching, we decided that the time was ripe to create an actual physical place where people with life-threatening illnesses could come to heal and/or to die consciously. This home, called the Dying Center, was founded

in 1981 in Santa Fe, where Stephen, Ram Dass and I had moved, and was the first such residential facility in the West.

I moved back to the San Francisco Bay Area in 1986 and started the next incarnation of the Project, now called the Living/Dying Project. A group of trained volunteers around the world offers free-of-charge spiritual support with no dogma to promote.

Fear of death is still a largely denied and unexamined force in our culture that continues to compel us individually and collectively to the out-of-balance situation in which we find ourselves politically, economically, environmentally, and socially. The collective denial of our mortality has led us to a near future in America and in the West that appears problematic and deeply uncertain. The Living/Dying Project is not so much about dying as about the slash between the living and dying in our name, the interface where our certain mortality can inform the way we live and how we live determines how consciously we die. This work is about healing in the fullest sense. As Maharaj-ji said, "The body passes away. Everything is impermanent except love of God." Our society is at a vital choice point where each of us is invited again and again to choose healing rather than the denial and avoidance that clearly are no longer viable.



Ram Dev

# Gajar Halwa

A North Indian Winter Sweet Treat

About 12 servings

## Ingredients:

- 2 pounds cleaned, peeled, grated carrots
- Equal amounts half & half and whole milk to cover the carrots
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup sugar
- 1 cup raisins
- 10 black peppercorns
- 1 stick butter
- 1 cup cashews

## Directions:

1. Place grated carrots in a heavy pot or a non-stick pot.
2. Barely cover with the mix of half & half and whole milk.
3. When milk mixture boils add the sugar. Taste for desired sweetness
4. Boil and stir constantly. Be careful not to burn.
5. When the mixture is reduced by  $\frac{1}{3}$ , add raisins and peppercorns (if desired, they can be removed before serving, though they provide an interesting taste sensation if left in).
6. When reduced to half, add the butter.
7. Cook 15 minutes and add cashews.
8. Cook to desired consistency – do not overcook.

~ Jacques Achsen



# Puja Dukan

It is our deepest honor to serve you on your path.

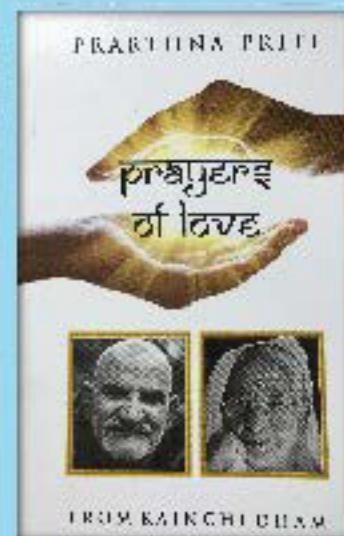
The Puja Dukan is always open at [www.nkbashram.org](http://www.nkbashram.org) Please check the website or call 575-751-4080 for up-to-date store hours. The store is generally open during darshan hours.

Sales from the Puja Dukan help support ashram operations and we welcome donations of new products to carry. This can include sponsoring a wholesale inventory purchase, a donation of new goods from your store or business, or something you lovingly design and create especially for Maharaj-ji's ashram store. If you are interested in making such a seva offering, please contact [anushri@nkbashram.org](mailto:anushri@nkbashram.org)

May His Grace keep you, always.



Remember to BE HERE NOW with this clock featuring the original graphic from the classic Ram Dass book that brought us all together. \$42



Offered at the holy feet of Sri Maharaj-ji, Sri Siddhi Ma, and Sri Jivanti Ma, this book includes careful transliterations and translations of all the prayers that are sung twice daily at Baba's Temple at Kainchi Dham in India. The compilation of this chanting book was overseen by Ram Rani Rosser. \$9

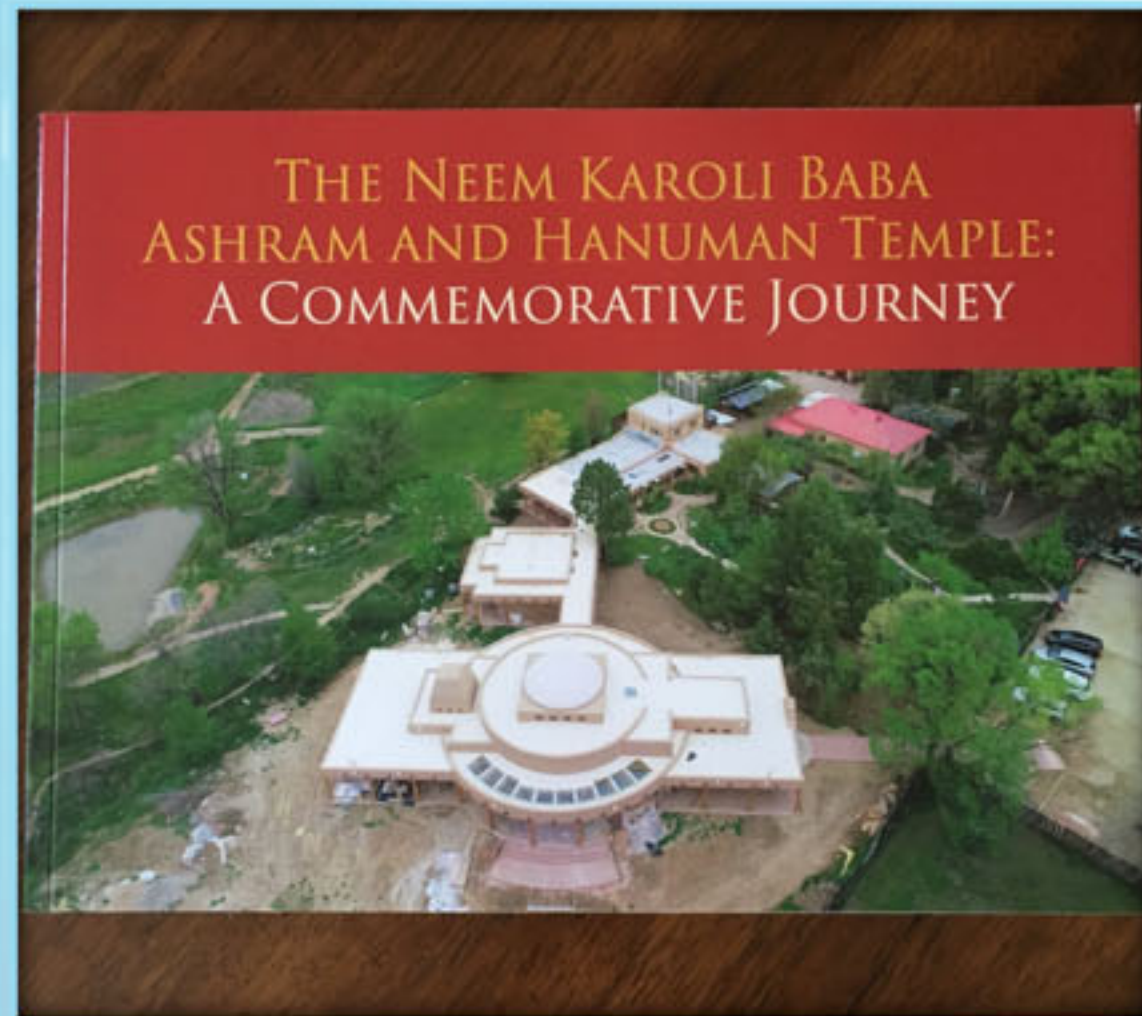


Ring in a joyful sound all year with these brass chimes that easily hang anywhere. Complete with the symbol for OM, primordial sound of the universe. \$18



Divine Shakti graces every page of this 2022 calendar featuring Sri Siddhi Ma and Sri Jivanti Ma of Kainchi Ashram. \$16

# Puja Dukan



Learn how we got from there to HERE. This book contains an overview of the journey, from the construction of Hanuman's murti in India to the completion of His Mandir in 2020. \$20



Spread Maharaj-ji's message of love by sporting one of our signature FEED EVERYONE aprons at your next feast. \$22



**MASK SALE!** Get our special **CHOOSE LOVE** and **LOVE EVERYONE** face masks, notice a lessening of tension in your immediate vicinity. \$5.50



The name of RAM adorns this copper bracelet. Wearing copper has been used as a folk remedy to relieve arthritis for millenia. \$10

# Treasurer's Report

During 2021, we spent a great deal of time examining the expenses for the mandir. We went through bank statements and reports going back to 2001. The numbers provided in the Mandir report represent those figures. Some of the early costs such as legal fees, were paid by the General Account. As of September 1, 2021, mandir costs are included in the General Account.

As to the General Account, we were fortunate to have sufficient donations, a loan from the government, and strong sales from the Puja Dukan to provide for us during this time of limited opening of the ashram. We have kept a close eye on our costs and have used the money provided carefully. We are, again, very grateful for the generosity of our community. If not for you, we would not have survived this difficult time.

Respectfully submitted,  
Chris Janeczko  
January 13, 2022

## NEEM KAROLI BABA ASHRAM AND HUNAMAN TEMPLE PROFIT AND LOSS STATEMENTS

GENERAL ACCOUNT		January 2021 – December 2021	
<b>Income</b>			
	Agriculture	\$2,580	
	Concert	13,355	
	Donations	539,375	
	Interest & Misc. Inc.	60	
	PPP Loan Forgiven	16,250	
	Puja Dukan Sales	128,883	
	Rental Income	18,344	
	<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>		<b>\$718,827</b>
<b>Expenses</b>			
	Agriculture	\$19,840	
	Automobile	2,129	
	Charitable Contributions	2,586	
	Equipment & Tools	4,032	
	Festivals	13,291	
	Groceries	18,004	
	House-Badri, Repairs	9,415	
	Insurance	13,893	
	Mandir	33,371	
	Newsletter	7,105	
	Office	10,459	
	Professional Fees	6,677	
	Projects	105,453	
	Puja Dukan	73,504	
	Repairs & Maintenance	17,539	
	Service & Bank Charges	5,382	
	Staff	108,131	
	Supplies	21,521	
	Temple	4,164	
	Utilities	24,639	
	<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>		<b>\$511,135</b>
	<b>NET PROFIT</b>		<b>\$207,692</b>



**MANDIR ACCOUNT**

January 2003 – August 2021

**Income**

Donations	\$2,574,684
Interest Income	521
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$2,755,205</b>

**Expenses**

Architect	38,606
Bank Fees & Service Charges	1,989
Contract Labor	2,285
Construction	2,209,214
Engineering	32,512
Equipment	4,688
Finishing	22,657
Fundraising-Merchandise	19,841
Fundraising-Labor	23,705
Fundraising-Postage, Shipping	28,414
Landscaping	104,072
Liability Insurance	2,306
Materials	50,179
Media Costs	31,599
Miscellaneous	2,676
Plan Ahead (P. Nicholson)	73,992
Permits	6,985
Pre-Const. Costs-Legal	5,080
Professional Fees	366
Shipping Costs-Materials	5,186
Supplies	776
Temple Décor	85,092
Travel Expenses	1,123
Utilities	864
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$2,754,207</b>

**NET PROFIT \$998**



*Photo Courtesy Kimm Kiriako*

# 2022 Ashram Festivals

## MahaShivaratri

*Tuesday, March 1, Sunset to Sunrise*

Maha Shivaratri is 'the great night of Shiva'. It is on this night that Lord Shiva performs his heavenly 'tandav,' the dance that is the source of the cycle of creation, preservation, and dissolution. This special night also marks a remembrance of overcoming immorality and ignorance in life and the world. It is observed with introspective focus by chanting prayers and meditating on virtues such as social harmony, honesty, non-harm to others, charity, and forgiveness. Shivaratri is also considered the night when during Samudra Manthan, the churning of the ocean of milk by the devas and asuras (various types of divine beings), Halahala, a poison that had the power to destroy the universe, started to spread its fumes in the air and water. Shiva drank it to save the world. Goddess Parvati caught hold of his neck to avoid the poison from entering his body and so it remained in his throat turning it blue. Om Namah Shivaya! Shivaya Namah Om!



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## Hanuman Jayanti Friday,

*April 15 - Saturday, April 16*

Hanuman Jayanti is the day we celebrate Hanuman-ji's birth to Kesari and Anjana, Hanuman's father and mother. One day, while the heavenly maiden Anjana was wandering in the forest, she saw a monkey meditating like a holy sage. She began giggling uncontrollably and threw pebbles at him. Indeed, the monkey was a powerful holy sage who had transformed himself in order to perform spiritual meditation undisturbed. Angered, he cursed Anjana to also take the form of a monkey! He proclaimed that she would return to her original form only by giving birth to an incarnation of Shiva. Pleased with Anjana's prayers, fasting, and meditations, Lord Shiva blessed Anjana and Kesari with an immortal son who possessed intelligence, courage, tremendous strength, speed and the power to fly. Anjaneya ki Jai! Pavana Suta Hanuman ki Jai!



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# 2022 Ashram Festivals

## Guru Purnima

Tuesday, July 12 - Wednesday, July 13

Guru

Purnima is a day to acknowledge and celebrate the mystical union between seeker and God, lover and Beloved; the true Oneness, which is indivisible: God, Guru and Self are One. At the Taos ashram, Guru Purnima is a day of deep gratitude to Maharaj-ji, a day to offer worship, respect and to



recommit to dedicating ourselves to Love, Serve, Remember and the Truth. Baba said, "It is not necessary to meet the Guru on the physical plane." Because of His unending and unknowable love for us, He has come to so many of us in innumerable and mysterious ways - through dreams, in books and photos, in conversations, even in person many years after leaving His physical form. It is also a day to express gratitude and love to Sri Siddhi Ma and all our teachers for imparting their wisdom, knowledge, and love

to us. The date of Guru Purnima in the Hindu calendar is said to be the day, about 15,000 years ago, that Lord Shiva became the first Guru. It is also the birthday of Krishna Dwaipayana Vyasa who collected and divided the Vedas. Guru Purnima is a day to prioritize our desire to evolve beyond our present dimension. Sri Ek Hajar Aath Neem Karoli Baba ki Jai! Jai Guru Dev!



# 2022 Ashram Festivals

## Mahasamadhi Bhandara

Friday, September 9 – Sunday, September 11

Sri Neem Karoli Baba, known to millions of people as Maharaj-ji, left His earthly body on Anant Chaturdashi, the holiest day to Lord Vishnu. The exact day is calculated annually based on the Hindu lunisolar calendar. In the Gregorian calendar, this date is September 11, 1973. Maharaj-ji advised people to surrender to God's will above all things, to develop



love and faith, and to be free from unnecessary worries in life. An ocean of compassion, Maharaj-ji is the sustainer. He grants His grace to all. "He knows. He knows where each and everyone of us is, because even though we may leave him, he never leaves us... In his hands he holds the strings that are attached to the soul of each and everyone of us... He fills all space and time and we find ourselves, again and again, where we always were: here, in him." ~ Krishna Das, Preface to *"The Near and The Dear"*. Sri Sri Sri Anant Koti Neem Karoli Baba Santa Maharaj ki Jai!

## Navaratri

Monday, September 26 through Sunday, October 5

Nava, meaning nine, and ratri, meaning nights, signifies the nine nights of the sacred festival dedicated to worshiping the feminine nature of the Divine. The Devi, or Goddess, holds the cosmic energy that energizes the world. The nine nights of Navaratri are divided into subsets of three to adore different aspects of the supreme goddess. On the first three nights, the Divine Mother is invoked as the powerful force of Durga in order to destroy all our impurities, vices and defects. During the next three nights, the Mother is adored as Lakshmi, the giver of spiritual wealth. The last three nights are reserved for worshiping Saraswati, the goddess of learning, speech, music and the classical arts. Saraswati is also known as one who bestows the essence of the self.

Furthermore, each of the nine nights of the festival are dedicated to venerating and benefiting from a specific form of divine feminine energy. These include joy, spiritual growth and knowledge, groundedness, exuberance and enthusiasm, inner peace, courage and passion, elegance, harmony and kindness, stability, and inner richness. Jai Sri Mata-ji! Jai Sri Vaishnavi Devi ki Jai!

