

Hacienda de Guru Ram Das Newsletter

VOLUME 16 ISSUE 12

DECEMBER 2007



First snow of the season!

Let Go, Let God

Table of Contents

Ashram News	1
The Court of Guru Gobind Singh—Lecture by SSS	1
Ashram Calendar	2
Computer Corner	3
Ads & Tidbits	4
Going Green	4
Sangat Birthday's	5
Food for Health	6
Missal Duties	7

Ashram News

Winter Solstice Sadhana

Kundalini Yoga Intensive and 3-days of White Tantric Yoga®
Lake Wales, Florida

December 19-25, 2007

(Arrival day: Dec 18th at 1pm,
Departure day: Dec 25th by noon)

White Tantric Yoga Days: December 21-23, 2007

Advance Yourself! Join us in the serene setting of Central Florida for a rejuvenating experience guaranteed to bring the light back into your life during the cold winter months. For more information go to:

<http://www.3ho.org/events/yoga-retreat.html>



Guru Gobind Singh Ji's Birthday
January 5th (according to the Nanakshahi calendar)

In the Court of Guru Gobind Singh Siri Singh Sahib Ji, April 2, 1989

Have you ever wondered what it was like to be in the court of Guru Gobind Singh when he was alive? The Imperial Court, which was at Anandpur Sahib, was so devout and graceful that the other kings were jealous. You can imagine how glorious his court must have been.

The life of Guru Gobind Singh was very short according to earth years. His exact height was five feet, four point two inches. God has never made a man with more handsome features than his. His arms were very long. He could scratch his ankle while standing upright. That is why no enemy thought that he was of short stature. The beauty of the Lord God was that whosoever looked at him could never see that his arms were disproportionately long.

His voice was very musical. The most beautiful attribute he had was that when he listened to you, he could look into your eyes for hours without blinking - a quality no other man has ever achieved. Guru Gobind Singh could look straight into your eyes for hours and hours and hours and not become bothered.

He was so strong that he could keep two swords in his hands and circle them around his body for two to four hours at a stretch. He was fast, also. He used to give five hours to one good archer, to shoot at him. Guru Gobind Singh's swords would then circle so fast around him that they created a total shield block-

(Continued on page 5)

December Ashram Events	
Dec. 19 - 25	Winter Solstice Sadhana Lake Wales, Florida
Jan. 5	Guru Gobind Singh Ji Birthday Some of our young adults are planning a rousing celebration – more details to follow.
Ongoing Events	
6th of the month	Gurdwara commemorating the martyrdom of the Akal Takhat. This is traditionally a “Wish-and-a-Dish” langar meaning each person prepares a dish filled with their prayers and wishes to share with the sangat.
Sundays 6:30 am	Ishnaan Seva, washing the marble floors in the Gurdwara. All are welcome to participate in this uplifting event.
Every Thursday at 12:30 pm	Langar served in the Langar Hall. All welcome! To help, call Amrit Kaur, 753-7705 for food preparation, and Deva Singh at 927-0988 for general information.
Every Thursday at 4:30 pm	New Children’s Program Schedule! The 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month we will be focusing on Sikh Dharma with stories and activities surrounding the Gurus. The 2nd and 4th Thursday we will focus on 3HO and Kundalini Yoga.
Fridays 4:30—5:32 pm Gurdwara or langar hall	Prosperity Meditation to “develop the intuitive business mind and bring prosperity home.”
Sunday’s after langar	Free healing sessions are held in the Gurdwara. Acupuncture treatments by Guru Mitar Kaur and Sat Nam Rasayan Free Clinic facilitated by Guru Terath Kaur.

Akal Security employees are giving gifts to the Espanola Women’s Center at their annual Holiday Celebration instead of exchanging gifts. All monies donated are being matched by Akal Security. This was done last year also, to the delight of everyone involved!

Espanola White Tantric Yoga Course 2007

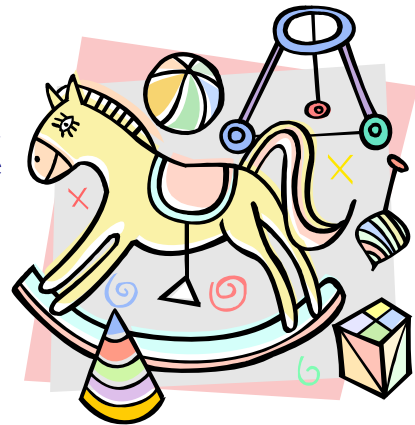
This was a beautiful and inspiring day attended by the most people yet - over 200! There were participants from ten States outside New Mexico, as well as many from neighboring areas in the State. We would like to thank all those who worked so hard to see that everything went smoothly: Siri Deva Singh and crew for sparkling floors, Sat Gurprasad Kaur and crew for set-up and clean up before and after, Guru Bachan Singh and crew for covering all the heavy muscle work needed, Jai Jeet Sangeet Kaur and registration workers who made things run smoothly to get us all accounted for, Pritpal Kaur and all the wonderful “keep up” monitors, Hari Kaur and Santokh Singh for graciously covering all the facilitator’s needs, Sat Nam Singh for chauffeuring Sat Simran Kaur so gallantly and Siri Guru Nam Kaur and kitchen crew for a most excellent meal! Many blessings to those who helped and those who took part. This wouldn’t have been possible without all of you!

Thank you and many blessings,

Mata GuruMeher Kaur

TOYS FOR TOTS www.toysfortots.org

A beautiful way to be known for our service and love. Donate a new toy to give to a child who would love to open a gift on Christmas morning!



Please bring unwrapped new toys, games, art supplies or books appropriate for babies, toddlers, school-age children and teens. Place in the donation box in the Langar Hall. The box will be picked up on Friday, December 14 for distribution. Please contact Gurufateh or Gurudatta if you have any questions—747-1811.

Blessings to All!

Computer Corner

By Guruka Singh

Back Me Up, Buttercup

Crash Plan at www.crashplan.com appears to have taken all the good elements of other online backup services and rolled them into one. For a \$20.00, one-time fee, you get the software that will allow you to remotely backup 50 GB of data (Yes... I said 50) and there are bigger plans for more money as well as a monthly subscription service.

The cool thing is that this is completely cross platform. You can back up the data from your Windows machine to your Mac. You can back up the Mac data to your Linux computer. You can take the... you get the picture. I think that alone is worth the \$20.00. To be able to back up each of my systems onto each other is just amazing — and the way to go. Of course, you also go the route of remote backup, which can give you peace of mind if you have important data that would be devastating to lose in a catastrophic situation such as a fire, flood, or any act of nature.

Let's look at a few of the features of Crash Plan:

- No buttons to push or CDs to burn. Simply install CrashPlan and it quietly runs in the background protecting your files without slowing you down.
- With CrashPlan and your own destination, there are no fees or extra charges like other off-site backup products and no limits on how much you can back up.
- Your files are encrypted, off-site and at multiple destinations of your choosing. Only off-site backup protects your files from theft, fire, and other local disasters. CrashPlan insures your privacy by encrypting your files before they are sent, keeping personal files personal.
- CrashPlan gives you freedom in choosing your backup destinations. Back up your new Mac to your old PC, your laptop to a friend's desktop, whichever you want. Worried about using too much space on a friend's computer? No problem! CrashPlan will use an attached USB drive to hold your files.

Research Before You Buy Electronics with Retrevo

Price-comparison sites such as MySimon and Price-Grabber are great for finding the best deals for holiday gifts. But just because something is cheap doesn't mean it's worth your dollars. It's essential to research the product first before you buy. And with so many new elec-

tronics items that come out every year, it's even hard to keep up!

Enter the revamped www.retrevo.com an online community that offers consumer electronics ratings in real-time based on professional and user reviews across more than 40 product categories. Retrevo analyzes thousands of expert and user reviews from articles, forums, blogs, and manufacturer sites and displays these reviews on the site. Vipin Jain, Retrevo's president and CEO says that "Retrevo cuts through that clutter to help you find the right match for your needs. Up-to-the-minute independent information is amassed and translated into unbiased answers that can be easily understood by all consumers, technically savvy or not." Retrevo is similar to SmartRatings.com, but that site doesn't offer as nearly as many expert/user reviews, nor does it provide product manuals like Retrevo does.

Do You Use IE7?

If so, you definitely need IE7PRO, an add-on for Internet Explorer. It includes Tabbed Browsing Management (finally! New URL's automatically open on a new tab just like Firefox!) Spell Check, Inline Search, Super Drag Drop, Crash Recovery, Proxy Switcher, Mouse Gesture, Tab History Browser, Web Accelerator, User Agent Switcher, Webpage Capturer, AD Blocker, Flash Block, Greasemonkey like User Scripts platform, User Plug-ins and more. Now IE7 can do most of the cool stuff that Firefox does! Download it for free at <http://www.ie7pro.com/>

Fix up those ugly JPEG Files

JPEG Enhancer restores the quality of your JPEG images that have been damaged by over-compressing them. Download free at <http://www.vicman.net/jpegenhancer/index.htm>

Light Artist

Light Artist allows you to add realistic lighting effects to your photos. Modify the light color, add multiple light sources, change the surface qualities of the image and add various ambient illumination effects. Using one of the image channels as the texture channel you can even add 3D relief to your images. Download it free at <http://www.vicman.net/lightartist/>

Easy Video Downloader

Another free download at <http://www.videodownloader.fdrilab.com/> enables easy downloading of videos from YouTube and Google Video. These can be saved as AVI or MPEG4 formats so you can

(Continued on page 7)

Ads & Tidbits



Sat Shabad Kaur, Sahaj Singh and Suraj Kaur are blessed to announce the arrival of **Padmani Kaur Khalsa** to

our family. She was born with much of her family there to greet her. She is now resting at home and looks forward to meeting the entire sangat soon.

Congratulations to Dr. Arjan Kaur who will begin practicing at the **Espanola Advanced Center for Healing (EACH)** at the end of January or beginning of February in 2008. The center is located at 509 West Pueblo, Espanola. (The street directly before the Fairview Pharmacy.)

Arjan specializes in Applied Kinesiology, which uses a system of muscle testing to determine problems and imbalances in the body. Treatments may involve gentle adjustments to the spine, myofascial therapies (or massage), Craniosacral therapy, meridian, acupuncture, stress relief techniques, nutrition, dietary management, and evaluating for environmental irritants.

EACH also offers Kundalini Yoga Classes! **Guru Meher Kaur, Jr.** began teaching a beginner's yoga class at **EACH** in September. Lori Garcia (Body Basics) has been teaching many Kundalini Yoga classes at the center for some time. For more information call 747-3368.

Hacienda de Guru Ram Das Newsletter
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 Website: www.espanolaashram.com

Going Green

U.N. wants Global Action on Mercury Threat
 By Daniel Wallis, (Editing by Matthew Jones) © Reuters
 News Source: <http://uk.reuters.com>

Mon Nov 12, 2007 - NAIROBI (Reuters) - Countries must speed up collective efforts to phase out the use of deadly mercury, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) said on Monday. Industries from mining to chemicals manufacture and power generation use the toxic heavy metal, and many governments have taken steps in recent decades to cut usage and protect citizens.

"However, the fact remains that a comprehensive and decisive response to the global challenge of mercury is not in place and this needs to be urgently addressed," Achim Steiner, the head of Nairobi-based UNEP, said in a statement. Exposure to mercury -- sometimes called quicksilver -- can damage the brain, nervous system and fetuses. Western nations have slashed its usage, but activists say poorer countries increasingly rely on it for processes including small-scale gold mining.

UNEP is hosting a week-long meeting of governments and experts that began in Thailand on Monday to discuss how to reduce environmental sources of mercury. Steiner said the world was demanding fast action. "There is no real reason to wait on many of the mercury fronts. Viable alternatives exist for virtually all products containing mercury and industrial processes using mercury."

Scores of environment ministers meeting in Kenya in February agreed to phase out mercury use, but stopped short of a legally binding treaty imposing tough targets that had been demanded by anti-mercury campaigners and the European Union (EU).

Activists blamed a group of countries led by the United States, which rejected the idea of a binding treaty, preferring what it said were more flexible voluntary partnerships aimed at helping developing nations cut their use of the toxic metal. The EU, the world's top mercury exporter, plans to ban exports by 2011. The biggest importers are China and India.

(Continued from page 1)

ing any arrows from penetrating. His skill and speed of movement were unbelievable!

He was strictly vegetarian. You might read in history books that Guru Gobind Singh ate goat meat or lamb. It is not true. Not only was he strictly vegetarian, his diet was very simple. It consisted mostly of nuts, fruits, milk and sometimes rice and grams (beans). Guru Gobind Singh occasionally visited the Khalsa langar and ate chapatis and dahl. He was very fond of langar which was prepared by Bhai Nand Lal Goya, a Persian poet.

His dress was always perfect. He never wore wrinkled clothing. He was the neatest, the cleanest, and the most well-behaved man that God ever produced of Himself. It is said that even when his arch enemy would sit in his presence, even then he spoke very gracefully and very lovingly. Guru Gobind Singh was so graceful that even in war, when victory could have been achieved by an act which would be just a little less than graceful, he would not do it.

Guru Gobind Singh never slept more than an hour or so in 24 hours. His sleep consisted of lying down and getting up. His mind was very meditative and completely at rest. His breath cycle was one minute long, which no man has so far achieved in spite of the fact that we have had wonderful yogis on this planet. He had the longest inhale and longest exhale, therefore he never lost his cool in the most adverse environments. He was a model of patience.

One thing more about Guru Gobind Singh - his face was never without a smile, but he rarely laughed because his laugh was so loud and thunderous that it caused everybody in the court to laugh. Therefore, he rarely laughed, but he always smiled. When he did laugh, it could go on for hours.

He was always accompanied by a white hawk who had a very special job. Between Lahore and Delhi, messages were sent by pigeons; this white hawk was so gentle that he could go after the messenger pigeon and completely overtake him without hurting him at all. He would bring him down, very calmly, the message would be read, put back and sent off again. So Guru Gobind Singh operated an entire CIA with one simple white hawk. This hawk was also trained to fly as high as the clouds over Guru Gobind Singh's horse. Once Guru Gobind Singh was riding with about ten Gursikhs, and the hawk immediately shot straight down like a direct arrow. In spite of

(Continued on page 7)

November Birthdays

- 2nd Sat Mitar Kaur (OR)
 5th Sat Want Singh
 Sat Jiwan Kaur (FL)
 6th Satya Singh
 Siri Simran Kaur
 Jagat Singh
 Dharma Kaur (Birs)
 7th Krishan Shiva Singh
 8th Dharma Singh
 Guru Nam Kaur (CO)
 11th Nirbhe Kaur
 Gurunam Kaur (DAO)
 Dev Dharam Kaur (CA)
 13th Sat Bir Singh (Nirinjan K.)
 15th Dr. Sat Kirpal Kaur
 Ragu Bir Singh
 Ruby Kaur
 Sat Shabad Kaur
 16th Guru Tera Kaur
 17th Sree Aatmaa Kaur (Gobind S & Vir K.)
 18th Dr Sat Siri Kaur
 19th Dharam Singh (Dharam K.)
 Dharma Kaur (Parmatma S & Guru Daya Kaur)
 20th Siri Nirongkar Singh
 21st Siri Karam Kaur
 22nd Daya Singh
 Sat Sangeet Kaur
 26th Hari Har Singh (Nam Nidhan K.)
 Saat Pursha Singh
 28th Hari Rai Kaur (Dharm S & Guru Kirn K)
 Himmat Singh
 31st Guruka Singh



Dear Family and Friends,

I hope this letter finds you well. If you get a chance, please tell me how things are in your world. Well the last time I wrote

was awhile ago. I have now moved into the university apartments. They are really close to campus which is convenient for classes. This is also the smallest room



I have lived in that is packed with a kitchen, bathroom, bed, and desk. It is actually quite cozy. Once I get batteries in my camera again, I will share it with you.

Classes have started and they give you a month to figure out what classes you will actually take. At first I thought that was silly, but now, after having changed my classes around 4 or 5 times, I am happy that they gave us so much time. Between finding classes that I can actually understand more or less, and that also fit into my requirements, has been a challenge. But I will be finalizing my classes on Monday which will give me relief.

I have also started taking Latin dance classes, which I am so happy about! They are teaching us Merengue, Salsa, Bachata and another one which I forgot the name of. When I am not taking classes, I have been traveling. I have been able to see Murcia, Madrid, San Sebastian, Barcelona and Zaragoza. Each city has a different flavor and something different to offer in the way of sights, food and things to do. Barcelona, so far has been my favorite, a dynamic international city with so many things going on.

I am adding a few pics to this letter, since my Flickr account doesn't seem to be working so well. They are mostly in Zaragoza. They were having the fiesta of the year that day so there were a lot of people. We also went to a museum where apparently they uncovered an old Roman theater while they were digging a foundation for a new building. I love you all!

Blessings,
 Sat Nam Kaur
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 R.U. Los Abdules
 Campus Universitario de Arrosadia
 C/ Soto de Lezkairu, s/n
 31006 Pamplona
 Spain



Food for Health

Noor's Oriental Noodle Soup

1-2 Tbs. sesame oil
 1-2 carrots, chopped
 1 stalk celery, chopped
 1 onion, chopped
 1 baby bok choy, chopped
 ½ pkg. Rice Sticks (1/2" wide rice noodles)
 1-2 qts. vegetable stock or water
 2 Tbs. Miso paste
 Tamari, to taste
 Black pepper, to taste
 Chives

Optional:

2-3 dried Shitake mushrooms, sliced (soak in water for an hour before using)
 1 tsp. wakami (seaweed)

Saute the vegetables in sesame oil for several minutes until onions are soft. Add water and miso and bring to a boil. Add spices and noodles. Cook until noodles are done. If you use the shitake mushrooms and wakami, add along with the spices. Serve with sliced chives sprinkled on top.



If you have trouble finding Oriental or India food ingredients in our area, you can find a vast selection at the **Talin Market** in Albuquerque. Check out their website at <http://www.talininc.com/>

(Continued from page 3)

watch them or edit them locally without needing to be connected to the Net.

Watch Movies on Your Handheld Device

Here’s another free piece of very useful open-source software that allows you to shrink DVD movies so you can take them with you on your iPod, cell phone or other portable device. It’s called Handbrake <http://handbrake.m0k.org/> It even allows you to include the subtitles of foreign-language movies. A very handy tool.

Where Do You Find All Those Great Online Videos?

People ask me this question all the time. Well here’s the answer. If you have a broadband connection run, don’t walk, to <http://www.getmiro.com/> and, uh... get Miro! Miro is a totally cool, free open-source RSS video player that allows you to subscribe to multiple video channels and download the videos in the background. No, it won’t fill up your hard drive with gigs of useless videos because the videos expire and self-delete if you haven’t watched them in five or six days (that duration is settable, of course) and, yes, you can keep any of the videos you wish. Start with the wonderful TED Talks and the hilarious Onion News videos. Once you start using it, you’ll be hooked on how fun it is. This is a truly cool tool!

Do let me know if this column is useful to you and also do keep sending me your suggestions for column topics, along with your own tips or cool downloads, so I can share them with the Sangat in our monthly column here. Just email them to me at guruka@sikhnet.com .

December Missal Duties				
Date	Set-up	Langar	Clean-up	Akhand Path
11/26-12/2	4	1	2	3
12/3-12/9	1	2	3	4
12/10-12/16	2	3	4	1
12/17-12/23	3	4	1	2
12/24-12/30	1	2	3	4

(Continued from page 5)

every effort by the riders, the horses immediately took shelter. They found out later that some people were waiting there to ambush them. The hawk was trained as a complete radar system in every difficult situation. That is why we call Guru Gobind Singh “Chittee baaj vaalaa,” “The King with the White Hawk.” That hawk has a very definite place in the history of Guru Gobind Singh.

His poetry has the power of prayer. No man has ever written poetry in as complete a naad as Guru Gobind Singh. When you listen to Jaap Sahib, sometimes you can even feel the pounding hooves of the horses.

Guru Gobind Singh’s mother and father both did a long, long, meditation before he was born to help bring him to the earth. It is said that this planet earth is a couple of billion years old, right? Mother earth meditated that long and God meditated many, many zillions of years to create a man like Guru Gobind Singh. It was not just a phenomenon that happened one day. Guru Tegh Bahadur, Guru Gobind Singh’s father meditated and uttered nothing but Sat Nam for twenty-seven years, 11 months, and eleven days before he became the Guru. Guru Gobind Singh meditated on Wahe Guru and on many, many other mantras.”

