

THIS MONTH AT
**KAUAI'S
HINDU
MONASTERY**

News from the
Home of Iraivan Temple

April 2020

Sacred Gardens: *A photo from Rishi Valley shows the gardens surrounding Iraivan Temple on all sides, full of giant boulders and tropical plants.*



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**KAUAI'S HINDU MONASTERY
SAN MARGA IRAIVAN TEMPLE**

Omnipresent Beauty: *A walk through the temple gardens always reveals something new and wonderful, like this pink orchid growing in the crotch of a banyan tree.*

Message from Satguru

Two monthly Ardra abhishekams to Nataraja were conducted in the month of March plus our monthly Chitra puja to Gurudeva. I conducted a webinar on March 8 presenting the April Publisher's Desk "Integrating Hinduism into Daily Tasks" as well as lessons 55 - 60 from *Path to Siva*. On March 15 we closed the monastery to visitors due to concerns about the Coronavirus. That made the second half of the month unusually quiet. The editing of my Publisher's Desk on "Should Parents Teach Their Kids Religion?" was completed for the July 2020 issue of HINDUISM TODAY. Here is a passage: "Not that long ago, it was standard practice for parents to pass on their religious tradition to their children. It was also common for parents to belong to a faith community and want their children to join that community. Times have changed and this is not nearly as common. Nowadays, a significant number of parents consider themselves spiritual but have no religious affiliation. Or they follow secular humanism. Others focus exclusively on the secular education of their children, not wanting them to participate in religious activities or classes, as they see no career value in religion. Some are simply against religion.... Recently I have heard some parents question if they even have the ethical right to ask their children to accept their religious beliefs and practices." General contributions for March totaled \$45,974, which is less than our minimum monthly goal of \$70,000. Special project contributions totaled an additional \$33,188. We are grateful to our global family of temple builders for your continued and generous support during the Coronavirus disruption of normal personal and family routines. Om Namasivaya, Satguru Bodhinatha Veylanswami.

Bodhinatha Veylanswami



Satguru's Travels

Tentative Plans

JUNE 21 - JULY 13: Maryland, Montreal, Nashville, Chicago, Raleigh

AUGUST 8 - 29: Dubai, Oslo, Moscow, Mauritius, London

From Gurudeva's Teachings



Founder of Kauai's Hindu Monastery, Satguru Sivaya Subramuniaswami (Gurudeva), 1927-2001

The astral plane is for the most part exactly duplicated in the physical plane, though it is of a more intense rate of vibration. Beings in the higher Antarloka are trained in technology, the arts and increments of culture to take up bodies in the Bhuloka, to improve and enhance conditions within it. It is in this more advanced realm that new inventions are invented, new species created, ideas unfolded, futures envisioned, environments balanced, scientists trained and artists taught finesse. We function constantly, though perhaps not consciously, in this subtle plane by our every thought and emotion. Here, during sleep and after death, we meet others who are sleeping or who have died. We attend inner-plane schools, there to advance our knowledge. The Antarloka spans the spectrum of consciousness from the hellish Naraka regions beginning at the patala chakra within the feet, to the heavenly realm of divine love in the vishuddha chakra within the throat. The Vedas recount, "Now, there are, of a truth, three worlds: the world of men, the world of the fathers, and the world of the Gods. The world of the Gods is verily the best of worlds."

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Clockwise from above left: The first landscape QR Code was installed at the bronze pavilion, and black volcanic Bali bricks were added to the perimeter; monks suit up to sandblast the massive metal Sivalingam base in the sanctum; Umut, Ape and Chenk at the first plinth stone-laying ceremony; after the arati; the lava rock will cover the brown foundation in this photo.



Happenings

Storm and serenity: (right) all is quiet just after dawn on Muruga Hill, past the bamboo you can see the 12-foot-tall stone Vel in the distance; (below) monks marvel at the Wailua River the morning of our 100-year record rainfall, which caused the river to rise over 20 feet.



Iraivan Temple Progress

The silpi stone carvers spent the month of March working on refining the detail carvings on the 64 pieces of stone that comprise the front steps. In February after months of careful planning, the massive concrete foundation for Iraivan Temple's front steps was poured. The silpis moved the yali stones temporarily into position on that foundation so that they could adjust the stones of the perimeter wall that border the front steps. (See page four of this newsletter for detailed coverage of the yali stones.) On March 11 a special ceremony was held to bless the beginning of the installation of the lava rock plinth on the temple's four foot high foundation. Yoginathaswami performed a Ganesha puja and Satguru placed gems beneath the single volcanic stone, which was then set into place permanently. As part of the rites, Swami blessed Umut Yegul of Inno8 and two of his best stone setters. During the blessing, Umut said that this will be his life's greatest work. Two weeks after the ceremony, the governor of the State of Hawaii banned all non-essential work and issued a Stay-At-Home order to prevent the spread of the Covid-19 virus. This postpones Umut's lava rock work until sometime in May (we hope).

Covid-19 Closure

On March 15, for the first time in 30 years, the front gate to the monastery did not open to the daily flow of visitors. With increasing concerns flooding in from devotees around the world for the health and safety of our monks and island members, Satguru and the senior monastics concluded that it was prudent to temporarily restrict public access to the monastery, for the health of our island community, pilgrims, members and monks. We watched as the quarantine and self isolation spread around the

planet. To counteract the uneasiness and worry that everyone was feeling we began to use our website to spread Gurudeva's message of the power of positive affirmation. A free course was developed called "Lessons for Sequestered Families" that contains fun and educational resources for all ages. See it here: <https://courses.himalayanacademy.com/courses/families>. As the name suggests it was created to help uplift and inspire everyone and anyone who might be feeling the impact of the current global situation. An appreciative testimony from a family who is using the course says: "The chapters are varied in topics, media and activities. An affirmation is followed by an audio from *The Guru Chronicles*, then a children's story, an upadesha from Bodhinatha, humor from HINDUISM TODAY, a video, art for coloring for the whole family and much, much more. We can choose an activity or go in order. Since our daughter likes to pick, we end up going back and forth between activities for her enjoyment. A big thank you to the monks for this timely family activity."

Publications and Other Activities

Satguru's weekly talks from the last two months have all been uploaded to the web—<https://tinyurl.com/Bodhinatha2Month>. The Covid lockdown has also been beneficial for our music video production (for school classrooms that amplify the lessons of *The History of Hindu India* book). Aks and Lakshmi of Eclipse Nirvana are using their stay-at-home time to work on the songs. The Covid situation has also benefited the monastery in another way: increased noni juice sales. Noni juice is prized in Hawaii as a home remedy for all kinds of ailments. The island of Kauai endured a tremendous rainstorm lasting several days in March. The flooding of the Wailua River that runs adjacent to the monastery was the highest in 100 years (the water was 20 feet higher than normal). Luckily, we suffered no significant flood damage.



Meet The Magnificent Yalis of Iraivan

By Rajkumar Manickam

Dragons, phoenixes and yalis share the common illusive wonderment question. Did they really exist at one time? Unlike the woolly mammoth and dinosaurs, the myth and mysterious existence of yalis will always stoke curiosity and imagination.

Wikipedia states: "In its iconography and image the yali has a catlike graceful body, but the head of a lion with tusks of an elephant and tail of a serpent. Images or icons have been found on the entrance walls of the temples, and the graceful mythical lion is believed to protect and guard the temples and ways leading to the temple. Descriptions of and references to yalis are very old, but they became prominent in South Indian sculpture in the 16th century." Throughout India, Sri Lanka, and anywhere a South Indian temple exists, the ferocious yali is embodied as the gatekeeper,

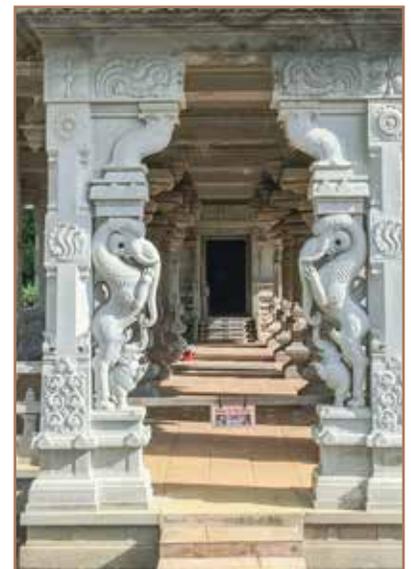
usually carved into temple pillars or stationed at doorway landings. They ward off the disturbed energies of the outside world. Though prominent to knowing eyes, yalis may often be overlooked as just another structure or a stand-alone symbolism. Whether shaped in cement, carved in soft stone or painstakingly sculpted in dense granite, yalis are here to stay throughout the twenty-first century and beyond. India has many examples from 10 centuries ago.

The creation of the all-granite, Iraivan Temple in Kauai artfully incorporates the yalis in its traditional Hindu temple architecture.

Two magnificent yali pillars stand tall at the entrance of Iraivan. A second set of smaller yalis are now being installed. They serve as elaborate handrails, set 30 feet apart, flanking the sides of the broad entry stairway leading up to the temple's Nandi Mandapam.



Yali creation: (clockwise from left) entry stair yali "handrails" ready to move into place; a silpi adds finishing touches; the two yali pillars with the Iraivan sanctum behind; Selvanathan Sthapati marking the yalis at the Bengaluru worksite; a 16th century yali pillar at Madurai Meenakshi Temple, Tamil Nadu, India



Estate Planning

A Tale of Two Siblings Shows the Choice of Trustee Is Crucial

Two brothers, never very close, were surprised when their 65-year-old mother called and asked them to meet with her. She would not tell them why. "My friends at the senior center keep telling me I'm crazy not to have a living trust," she told them when they met at her aging Victorian home on the edge of town. "I want you boys to help me." Amol, a hotel manager in his late fifties, lived just north of San Francisco with his wife. They had two adult children in the area. His much younger brother, Partha, a software engineer, lived alone in San Jose, in Silicon Valley. Amol, to Partha's relief, found a local estate planning attorney. In three weeks the trust was ready for their mother's signature. The two brothers were named successor co-trustees with equal powers.

All went well for three years. Then Amol, who visited his mother often, found her one weekend afternoon unable to continue a conversation. The diagnosis at the local emergency room was transient ischemic attack, a temporary lack of blood to the brain.

Shortly after they arrived at emergency, his mother was fully alert and clamoring to go home. But they spent the next five hours waiting for tests and the doctor's report. The doctor could find nothing specific, but insisted on overnight observation. The mother, discharged the next day, left fuming at being kept from her home when she had felt "perfectly fine." When Amol told Partha of the incident that afternoon, Partha asked pointedly why he hadn't been called right away. Amol shot back, "You've kept your distance for the last twenty years, and now you want me to be your personal eye-witness news team?" So it went for four more years as their mother continued to suffer fainting spells and diminished capacity. Partha regularly second-guessed his brother's decisions. Amol grew resentful of the time his mother required of him as the nearby son. Then one of Amol's children began taking what Partha thought was an unseemly interest in the value of his grandmother's estate. The damage to already tenuous family relationships was substantial. So far, the brothers avoided taking each other to court, but just barely. Amol and Partha's story, though fictional, is a composite of true stories.

Despite situations like these, estate planning attorneys continue to promote living trusts because they work so well in most cases, allowing families to handle major assets without court intervention while also bypassing probate. But



Upsets over assets: *Use care when selecting a trustee for a living trust. Otherwise, contention among family members may arise, as shown here. Choosing a qualified trustee helps ensure harmonious conditions.*

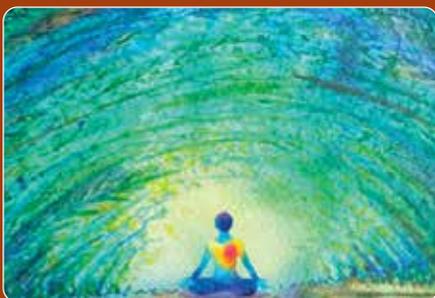
many living-trust boosters have tempered their enthusiasm by emphasizing the need for great care when selecting a successor trustee.

Having the love of a parent is not the sole qualification. Trustees need to have the competence to manage assets, the discipline not to consider property in a trust as theirs, the ability to cooperate with others, and the self-control to exercise fairness, honesty, respect, courtesy and good faith at times of great stress. No matter how well written your living trust is, the choice of your successor trustee remains crucial to its fulfillment.

The Hindu Heritage Endowment wants you to succeed in your estate planning efforts and, through them, both care for your family and remember good causes like the Iraivan Temple Endowment. To learn more about planned giving options to provide immediate tax and income benefits to you and your family, while also providing a future gift to HHE, please visit www.hheonline.org.



For information on establishing a fund at Hindu Heritage Endowment, contact Shanmuganathaswami at 808-822-3012, ext. 6, or e-mail hhe@hindu.org.



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Here Is My Contribution to
Help Finish Iraivan Temple

Gold Is the Need of the Hour



Much of Iraivan's visual power comes from the 23-karat gold leaf on its five towers and—in the future—the kodimaram. These glimmer in the tropical sun, contrasting strongly against the white granite. Getting thin gold leaf to endure in the tropical sun and rain has been a challenge, but our team near Washington DC (yes, the same team that does the gold cupolas on our capital buildings) has worked it out. They will be redoing all of our towers, and that is costly, so we turn to you to sponsor all or part of the project.

SPECIAL ITEM: Gold Leaf & Installation

The gilders who are coming to re-gild Iraivan's towers have determined that a thicker leaf is needed in the tropics than is normal in the US. Three times thicker! And they have identified and tested superior adhesives. Now we need to buy the gold and fly them to Kauai for the installation. To the right are the costs.

Sponsorships

- ✓ (Already Sponsored) Kodimaram: \$23,000
- ✓ (Already Sponsored) East Chinna Gopuram: \$33,000
- West Chinna Gopuram: \$33,000
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- Stupi Capstone: \$70,000
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