Vedic Center of Greenville

25th Anniversary Commemorative Souvenir

November 7-9, 2014

www.VedicCenterofGreenville.org
Happy 25th Anniversary
to the Vedic Center

We commemorate and salute our Hero’s who have built the foundation for our future generations.

Nothing greater is ever accomplished without endurance.
– The Mother
Pondicherry

Rama Family & JHM Hotels
www.jhmhotels.com
Greenville, SC
## Schedule of Events

### Day 1: Friday, November 7, 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5:30 pm to 7:30 pm</td>
<td>Dinner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:30 pm to 7:40 pm</td>
<td>Indian music and opening prayers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:40 pm to 8:00 pm</td>
<td>Welcome by President of Vedic Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00 pm Onward</td>
<td>Musical Program by Raj Pandya Group</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Day 2: Saturday, November 8, 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10:30 am</td>
<td>Prayer song by Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00 am to 12:00 pm</td>
<td>Devotional Speech by Shrimati Kamalaji</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00 pm to 12:30 pm</td>
<td>Release of 1000 balloons to mark 25th Anniversary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30 pm to 2:00 pm</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30 pm to 4:00 pm</td>
<td>Tea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:00 pm to 6:00 pm</td>
<td>Grand Rath Yatra followed by Aarti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:00 pm to 6:30 pm</td>
<td>Lighting of candles by Past Presidents; Video Presentation of Vedic Center, Address by Mayor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:30 pm to 8:00 pm</td>
<td>Dinner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00 pm</td>
<td>“Bollywood Legends” Orchestra by Samir Date, Deepali Somaiya &amp; Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30 pm</td>
<td>Snacks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Day 3: Sunday, November 9, 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10:00 am to 12:00 pm</td>
<td>Maha Yagna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30 pm</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00 pm</td>
<td>Close</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CONGRATULATIONS TO VEDIC CENTER FOR 25 GLORIOUS YEARS!
## TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Schedule of Events......................................................................................................................... 3
- President’s Message.......................................................................................................................... 7
- Chairman’s Message.......................................................................................................................... 9
- Governor of South Carolina, Nikki Haley Message........................................................................... 11
- Swami Chidananda Saraswati Ji Message........................................................................................... 13
- Former Governor of SC and Former Education Secretary, Dick Riley Message............................... 15
- Mayor of City of Mauldin, Dennis Raines Message........................................................................... 17
- A Special Recognition of Dr. Edward Jones by Shashi Rishi............................................................... 19
- Dr. Edward Jones Message............................................................................................................... 19
- President of India Association of Greater Greenville Message.......................................................... 21
- Guest Speaker, Shirmati Kamalaji’s Bio.............................................................................................. 23
- 25th Anniversary Celebration Committee......................................................................................... 25
- Vedic Center of Greenville Pioneers.................................................................................................. 26
- History of Indians in the Upstate and Establishment of Vedic Center............................................... 27
- Our Journey to Build Ahimsa Hall, by Ragesh Pandya................................................................. 30
- Vedic Center Presidents................................................................................................................... 31
- 1988: The Year When It All Started by Vipin Patel........................................................................ 33
- A Message of Unity by J. P. Rama....................................................................................................... 35
- To My Friends and All Supporters of Vedic Center by Nayan Desai.............................................. 36
- My Recollections by Shashi Rishi..................................................................................................... 38
- My Perspective by Sri Prakash Gupta................................................................................................ 41
- Our Key Accomplishments by V. K. Shah.......................................................................................... 43
- My Observations by Subhash Dhulekar.............................................................................................. 45
- Significant Events and Programs in the 25 years History by Geera Desai....................................... 46
- My Life in Greenville by Surendra Jain............................................................................................. 49
- My Recollections of Our Vedic Center by Chandu Chaudhari.......................................................... 51
- How It All Came Together by Indu Vakharia................................................................................... 52
- Celebrating 25 Years by Mukund Desai............................................................................................ 55
- Our Pujari Ji by Naren Hegneshwar.................................................................................................. 57
- Unsung Heroes by Kaumudi Patel..................................................................................................... 59
- Vedic Center - A Positive Influence by Pragnya Desai................................................................... 60
- My Memories of Vedic Center by Angele Rishi................................................................................. 61
- Growing Up Hindu in the Bible Belt by Amita Vakharia Ward........................................................... 62
- Tribute to Vedic Center by Manoj Jain.............................................................................................. 63
- Our Vedic Center by Ambika Bumb.................................................................................................. 65
- Reflections on Vedic Center by Shalini Bumb.................................................................................. 66
- Impact of Vedic Center by Nikhil Bumb............................................................................................. 67
- Congratulations to Vedic Center by Harbir and Sukhdev Guram..................................................... 69
- Vedic Center Balvihar by Achyut and Shobha Vadoothker and Balvihar Teachers.......................... 70
- Amazing Vedic Center by Jaimeed Shah............................................................................................ 73
- A Balvihar Student Writes by Dhriti Shah.......................................................................................... 74
- Vedic Center Deities.......................................................................................................................... 76
- Historical Photos............................................................................................................................... 78
- Donors Who Made Dreams a Reality, Our Vedic Center............................................................... 81
- Future Projects, Wish List................................................................................................................. 83
From the Mathur Family

Happy 25th Anniversary to the Vedic Center

We are truly blessed to be part of this great Spiritual Sanctuary

Thank you to all the founding members of the Vedic Center for their foresight and vision

And special thanks to each and every volunteer who has helped maintain that vision

Let’s Celebrate

www.upstatecpas.com
President’s Message

Dear Devotees,

We will all agree that Vedic Center has been a vibrant force in Greenville, South Carolina for 25 years. We are the religious and spiritual home for individuals and families in the region. It gives me immense honor to welcome you to celebrate 25 years of Vedic Center.

I believe it will be appropriate to start with a little history and timeline of Vedic Center’s existence. In 1985 a small group of devoted and dedicated pioneers from within our Community had a dream to have a temple in the Upstate, South Carolina. Their dream became a reality in 1989 and our temple opened its doors to all of us to meet and pray. Because of the tenacity and dedication of a few, we have a glorious Vedic Center in Upstate serving the needs of a growing Indian community. On behalf of our executive team, board of trustees and community at large I want to congratulate and salute these founding members of Vedic Center.

Sage Yagnavalkya once observed, “A Temple is a state of mind. A temple is a place of tranquility and peace. A temple is the essence that sustains our day-to-day existence.” When I look at our Vedic Center all these qualities are self-evident. Our temple is a sanctuary from all stresses and problems in one’s life. It is a place to relax, a place to meditate, a place to connect with our God, a place to share a meal with our extended family and friends and a place to share our joys and sorrows.

Vedic Center programs have helped many of us to grow spiritually, religiously, and as human beings. In the last few years we have had the honor to listen to Bhagwat Katha, Ram Katha, Shiv Katha, and Hanuman Katha at the Vedic Center by world renowned experts. Each year, we come together to celebrate Navratri, Holi, Diwali, Pongal, and Ugadi and much more. Temple doors are always open to allow us to have one on one time with our Gods.

As you know, Our Vedic Center has evolved over the last two and half decades. To celebrate this journey, I invite you to look through the photographs and memorabilia and walk thru memory lane with us. Through the years each executive committee and membership of the Vedic Center has improved on the vision of the pioneers. Ahimsa Hall was created to meet the growing needs of the community; a great Kitchen was added yet a few years later. On the 25th year of the Vedic Center, I am proud to say, we were able to renovate and upgrade the entire temple to provide better and updated facilities.

Like the pioneers 25 years ago, we need to have a vision for the next 25 years. I extend a personal invitation on behalf of our executive team and board of trustees for all of you to be a part of “Vision 2040”. We need your commitment and involvement to help us shape the next 25 years. Be the pioneers of the Future Vedic Center.

We can all take a bow and congratulate ourselves that through our efforts and dedication, we will leave for our children a better, more inclusive Vedic Center to meet and to worship.

So let’s take the time to celebrate…

May Ramji be with you always.

Shailendra Mathur
President, Vedic Center
This weekend we have all gathered to celebrate and appreciate the 25th Anniversary of the Vedic Center. It is here that all of us have felt the light shine on our inner spirit. Our Family is truly grateful to each and every person who has helped to create and maintain this treasure in Greenville. We hope that you always have Peace, Joy and Love.

The Jain Family
Chairman’s Message

Dear Friends:

During this year of 2014, we celebrate the 25th Anniversary of our institution the Vedic Center.

As we enter the Vedic Center we see several Deities on the altar. Different people have faith in their own preferred Deity or God. This diversity does not divide our community but rather brings us together. We respect all and pray together. This is the beauty of our faith and culture.

As our community of Indians has grown in Greenville the Vedic Center as an institution has kept us together and fulfilled our lives with our faith, beliefs and social requirements.

The success of the Vedic Center and the Ahimsa Hall is due to the hard work and cooperation of the community as a whole. It is our dreams come true. I want to congratulate you for its success. We must remember however, that this is not the end of our progress. We must keep on working together to improve upon what we have and meet the future needs of our community. The visionaries are already talking of future plans such as a home for our priest, Nav Graha sthapana, Kalash for the appearance of the temple, tiles for the floors and so on.

We have tried to recognize all individuals who have volunteered or contributed to the activities of the Vedic Center. This however is an impossible task. If we have missed your name please know it is not intentional.

The celebration of the 25th Anniversary this weekend has been made possible due to many volunteers joining different committees working together tirelessly from over two months. I thank you and salute you for your dedication and service.

It has been my pleasure to serve you as a chairman. I appreciate your confidence in me and allowing me to be of service to you and the institution.

Surendra Jain, chairman
25th Anniversary Committee
Indu, Neela and Kavita Congratulate the Vedic Center on 25 years of serving our Indian Community.

Unique Builders is a General Contractor located in Greenville, South Carolina. Unique specializes in new construction and project development. Our mission is to serve our clients with fairness and integrity from day one until final completion of the project.

- Licensed in South Carolina and North Carolina
- Serving the Upstate since 1987.
- Women owned and minority business enterprise
- Projects includes townhome communities, business and medical offices, car washes, convenience stores, hotels and other commercial facilities.
- Coordinate with in-house real estate division Unique Realty Company to obtain land and develop commercial sites.

Our goal is to offer lasting innovative and creative building solutions.

Contact Us:
Unique Builders & Realty
101– A Regency Commons Drive
Greer, SC 29650
Office: (864) 801-1551
Fax: (864) 801-1510
www.unique-builders.net

Indu Vakharia
(864) 303-7539

Kavita Vakharia Borsum
(864) 934-3933
Dear Friends,

On behalf of the people of the Palmetto State, I am pleased to send congratulations as you celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the Vedic Center of Greenville.

It’s a great day in South Carolina as we recognize the Vedic Center for 25 years of service to the Indian community of Greenville. The observance of this milestone offers a special opportunity to reflect on your past accomplishments while looking forward to future opportunities. In addition to serving the religious and cultural needs of its members, the Vedic Center has taken an active role in promoting inter-cultural awareness and understanding through the development of cooperative relationships with other faith communities and organizations. Affirming our commitment to interfaith harmony, religious liberty, and tolerance for diverse traditions and beliefs contributes to our continued strength and prosperity, and I would like to thank the Vedic Center for fostering appreciation for the different faiths, beliefs, and cultures found in the Palmetto State.

Michael and I wish you well for a memorable evening. God bless.

My very best,

Nikki R. Haley

NRH/Id
Celebrating Our 43rd Year 1971-2014

The mission of North Hills Medical Center with its multi-specialty practice is to provide Quality Physicians and Professional Care at a Reasonable Cost.

NEW PATIENTS ALWAYS WELCOME

North Hills Medical Center has five offices spread out over Greenville County to better serve its patients.

Greer
319 S. Buncombe Rd.
(864) 877-3883
Family Practice • Pediatrics

Highway 14
3904 S. Hwy. 14 • Greenville
(864) 987-9990

Mauldin
309 West Butler Rd.
(864) 297-1575

North Main
505-C N. Main St. • Greenville
(864) 232-2734

Pelham Road
800 Pelham Rd. • Greenville
(864) 234-5800 Press 2 for español

Family Practice
Internal Medicine
Occupational Medicine
Orthopedics
Psychiatry
Pediatrics

Podiatry
Gynecology
Radiology
Laboratory
Pharmacy
Sleep Center

Most Insurances Accepted
864-234-5800
24 Houranswering Service

At the Pelham Road office
Mon-Fri 5-8 p.m.
Saturday 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
Sunday Noon-5 p.m.
Holidays 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Dr. Nayan Desai - Geera Desai
www.NorthHillsMedicalCenter.com
Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji

Ashirvadam

All the Divine Souls of the Vedic Center of Greenville, South Carolina,

I hope that - by God’s grace - this finds you and all your loved ones in the best of health and happiness. The 25th Anniversary Celebration for this center is such a wonderful, divine, and auspicious occasion.

I am so impressed by this beautiful, divine community. I wish I could be there with you to celebrate this wonderful occasion. However, although I am not with you physically, please know that my love and blessings are always with you.

You may be living thousands of miles away from the soil of Mother India, but the purity and divinity of Her spirit live and breathe within you more than in most people who reside here physically.

Even birds can build homes for themselves, but to build a home for God, an abode of the Lord, takes true dedication and piety. That is what a temple is: a real home of God. The Vedic Center serves not only as a temple of worship, but by God’s grace, it also serves as a temple of education, a temple of culture, a temple of unity and a temple of sanskaras.

I pray to the Lord Almighty to infuse this center and your lives with even more piety, even more devotion and even more divinity in the years to come.

Whenever any of you come to India, it would be wonderful if you came to Rishikesh. The holy waters of Mother Ganga and the sacred Himalayas are calling you. Please know that Parmarth Niketan is your ashram and you are always welcome.

I send you all and all your loved ones my deepest blessings and prayers.

In the service of God and humanity,

Swami Chidanand Saraswati

Parmanath Niketan Ashram
P.O. Swargoshram, Rishikesh (Himalayas)
Uttarakhand - 245304, India

Ph. 91-135-244-0055
swamiji@parmarth.com
Traditional Values, Modern Technology

Naveen Saxena, MD, FACC
Board Certified Cardiologist
& Internist

Vinita Srivastava, MD
Board Certified Internist
& Sleep Study Specialist

Deborah Jenkins FNP-BC
Family Nurse Practitioner

Govind Rughani, MD
Board Eligible Internist

Nomita Joshi, MD
Board Certified Internist

Richard Datka, NP-C
Nurse Practitioner

We’re Right in Your Neighborhood!

Greenville  *  Taylors  *  Mauldin  *  Simpsonville

Appointments Available
Through Extended Hours & Weekends

Walk-ins Welcome!
Extensive Lab Testing, Nuclear & Regular Stress testing,
CT, X-Ray, Ultra Sound, Sleep Lab, Blood Work, etc.

864-233-2744
www.peacemedicalcenter.com
Congratulations to our wonderful Indian Community on the 25th Anniversary of the dedication of your Vedic Center. Over this period, your fine Community has increased to more than 1000 families contributing to the growth and prosperity of Greenville and the Upstate. The Vedic Center has served as a focal point for your religious and cultural activities.

I am so proud of our fine Indian Community.

My best wishes to all,

Richard W. Riley
THE CARE YOU NEED. WHEN YOU NEED IT.

Now accepting new patients!

Dr. Balasubramanyam Krishniah is a Board Certified Internist. He and his clinical team are specialized in Internal Medicine and primary care, dealing with prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of adult diseases. Our goal is to provide comprehensive care to patients. In addition to diabetes, hypertension, COPD, weight management and preventive care, we offer on-site laboratory services and diagnostic testing.

Same day appointments!
(864) 277-8300

Palmetto Internal Medicine And Primary Care, PA
300 West Butler Rd, Mauldin, SC-29662
P: (864)277-8300
F: (864)288-8722

Balasubramanyam Krishniah, MD
Elizabeth Cates, NP
Bettina Johnson, NP

www.mydr-k.com
October 13, 2014

Vedic Center

Dear Friends:

On behalf of the City of Mauldin Public Officials we would like to congratulate you on this milestone celebration of 25 years since the dedication of the Vedic Center in the City of Mauldin. What great growth you have experienced in your first 25 years. We appreciate the contributions your families have made to make the City of Mauldin a better place to live, work and play. At 25,000 in population, our city has also grown with you as we are now the 17th largest city of the 270 cities and towns in the great state of South Carolina. We also appreciate the religious and cultural activities that you are able to provide in your facility for the diverse community that we live in. We hope that the City of Mauldin can congratulate you in the future on your 50th Anniversary Celebration in 2064.

Sincerely,

Dennis Raines
Mayor – City of Mauldin
What’s more, one need not stoop to blowing one’s own trumpet, either. When your work is a result of your pure efforts, your work will speak for itself. Then, Krishna himself will blow the conch for you! In other words, praise will come to you in surprising, new ways...

Naveen Vinita Juhi and Anju Saxena
Vedic Center would like to honor Dr. Edward B. Jones, an eminent historian, a scholar, and a teacher. He distinguished himself as professor of history at Furman University from 1956 to 1996 and as emeritus professor since 2000.

Dr. Jones fell in love with India and visited India in 1965, 1973, 1979, and 1982, and spent tremendous amount of time studying history and culture of India. He brought India and its ancient civilization, art, and culture to Greenville by sharing his knowledge with countless students and area residents. His magnificent slide-lecture presentations allowed them to visualize India's beauty and diversity.

Dr. Jones and his wife Beth have been great source of inspiration and assets to the Indian community. They have participated in our celebrations over the years and have become a part of our Indian community.

It is with great pleasure that we proudly honor Dr. Edward Jones by naming him the India Goodwill Ambassador.

Message from Dr. Edward Jones

Beth Evans and I are proud to add our best wishes and hearty congratulations to the Indian community on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Vedic Center! Two and a half decades may not seem so long to some but remember Gandhi returned to India in 1919, launched the freedom struggle and just twenty eight years later India gained its independence from foreign rule. Many of us recall the countless hours of planning, fund raising, dedication and hard work that brought the Vedic Center to fruition.

We remember with pride and satisfaction its opening, the dedication of the Gods and so many worshipful and social events that came after and are ongoing. It is both a religious and a community center where old and new friends gather for fun, food and shared cultural celebrations. And so it shall be for generations to come. It should stand as a monument to the pioneering community of Indians, starting with a few, and eventually hundreds of families, taking root in the upstate.

Over the years they have enriched the social, economic, cultural and, yes, the political life of the upstate and across the state and nation. So, to long-time friends and many we do not personally know, we join you in this milestone celebration, the twenty fifth anniversary of the Vedic Center.

With solidarity and all good wishes,

Ed & Beth Evans Jones
With Best Wishes From
Greenville Medical Associates, PA

PRIMARY CARE FACILITY

Naveen R Bethi, MD
Raju Patnam, MD
Ana Endaya, FNP

- Primary Care and Urgent care.
- Adult/Child/Female Physicals, DOT/sports physical.
- On site X-rays.
- Labs, EKG, ECHO, DEXA, Ultrasounds, PFT, Nuclear Stress testing, Allergy testing.
- Minor Office surgeries, Fracture management.
- Weight Management.
- Self pay discounts, Same day appointments.
- Multilingual Staff: Hindi, Tamil, Telugu & Spanish.

OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK

8 AM – 7 PM MON - FRI.  10 AM - 2 PM SAT & SUN

Accepting New Patients, Walk Ins and All Insurances
545 W Butler Rd, Greenville, SC – 29607
Ph: 864-299-1990
www.Greenvillemedicalsc.com
Date: Sep 18, 2014

Many Congratulations to Vedic Center on celebrating 25 years.

India Association of Greater Greenville (IAGG) is looking forward to many more partnerships coming years to serve our community. IAGG and Vedic center team can take pride in serving the community and creating a showcase for our future younger generations to cherish our cultural heritage.

We wish Vedic Center and team all the best for their future endeavors.

Best Regards,

Janak Desai

2014 IAGG Team
Pinnacle Hospitality & DCMC Inc are proud sponsors of the Greenville Vedic Center

Wishing you all the best on your 25th Anniversary!

Sachin Shanbhag, Manisha & Shalin Patel,
and Chandrakant & Geeta Shanbhag
Srimati Kamala is an American whose life has been exclusively dedicated to interpretation of the spiritual heritage of India and the life of Mahatma Gandhi. She studied at University of Rouen, France, Saint Lawrence University in New York (B.A.), and University of Maryland, where she completed a Master’s Degree with honors in Special Education.

Kamalaji settled in Washington, DC in 1968 to become identified with the ideals of the Self-Revelation Church of Absolute Monism and the Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Foundation, both founded by Swami Premananda of India, who came to America in 1928. The Church follows the spiritual tradition of Swami Shankaracharya’s Advaita Vedanta with a totally nonsectarian philosophy.

Srimati Kamala was consecrated as a Swami by Swami Premananda in 1978. As an ordained Minister of the Church, a former Director of the Gandhi Memorial Center, and now as the president of Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Foundation, Inc., she has been in constant demand to speak before educational, cultural, and religious gatherings in the U.S. and abroad.

In recognition of her outstanding contributions in representing India’s spiritual heritage, she received an award “Ambassador of Indian Philosophy and the Ideals of Mahatma Gandhi in the USA” from the Association of Indians in America in Washington, DC in 1980. At the Second Convention of Asian Indians in North America (Chicago 1982), Kamalaji was given a special “Friend of India” award and citation for fostering the cultural and spiritual heritage of India in North America. Her visits to India in 1979, 1983, and 1986 were sponsored by the charitable Lotus Trust of Bombay and the Government of India (Indian Council for Cultural Relations).

In the summer of 1995, Kamalaji produced and directed a music-and-dance drama to celebrate 125th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, and presented it in cooperation with the Indian Embassy in Washington, D.C. The drama, “Moha-Mudgar”, was based on Swami Shankaracharya’s 16-verse text. Its presentation was held at Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. in July, 1995. The first lady, Mrs. Hillary Rodham Clinton, was a featured speaker during this program.

In 1995, Srimati Kamala received “Jamnalal Bajaj International Award for Promoting Gandhian Values outside India”. This prestigious award was presented by His Holiness the Dalai Lama at a ceremony in Mumbai on November 5, 1995. Srimati Kamala has authored six books: Mahatma Gandhi: An American Profile, Yours faithfully, M.K. Gandhi’ Reflections on Still Waters, I Am an Absolute Monist, The Mystic Cross, and Frontiers of the Spirit.
National presence, local service

When it comes to hotel insurance and risk management solutions, you want someone who understands your business inside and out. By partnering with an established and respected broker, you'll avoid short-term choices that could prove costly in the long run.

Successful insurance brokerage firms like BB&T Insurance Services emphasize that the long-term cost of your insurance program depends on proactive risk management and loss control programs. Our team of hotel specialists has a proven track record of successfully bringing a full range of competitive solutions to hoteliers of all sizes across the nation.

Members of our Hotel Division will work with you to analyze your needs, design a customized insurance and risk management strategy, and recommend risk reduction initiatives before marketing your program to leading providers. Our goal is to make your hotel look attractive to the insurance marketplace, positively impacting your total cost of risk.

Count on us for:

- Proactive service
- Diligent claims service
- Customized risk management solutions
- Hospitality-specific resources

Demand the best in expertise and service. Partner with the Hotel Division at BB&T Insurance Services. For additional information, please contact:

Chandler O. Griffith, CIC
Hotel Division - Vice President
BB&T Insurance Services Inc
Phone: 1-800-476-4339 ext 1391
Cell: 864-444-2807
Fax: 888-751-3014
Email: cgriffith@bbandt.com

©2008 BB&T. BB&T Insurance Services, Inc., is a wholly owned subsidiary of Branch Banking and Trust Company. Insurance products are not a deposit; not FDIC insured; not insured by any federal government agency; not guaranteed by the bank.
**Vedic Center Committees**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Executive Committee:</th>
<th>Board Of Trustees:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President: Shailendra Mathur</td>
<td>J P Rama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President: Ricky Patel</td>
<td>Bharti Mathur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary: Pankaj Dave</td>
<td>Ricky Patel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer: Naren Hegneshwar</td>
<td>Kaushik Patel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 25th Anniversary Celebration Committees |

| Event Chairman: Surendra Jain |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aarti and Maha Yagna:</th>
<th>Food Service:</th>
<th>Souvenir Editorial:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drs. Nayan &amp; Geera Desai*</td>
<td>Ricky Patel*</td>
<td>Indu Vakharia*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satish &amp; Rashmi Kinariwala</td>
<td>Praful Veer</td>
<td>Shashi Rishi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ravindra Patel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accounts / Financial:</th>
<th>Greetings Team:</th>
<th>Souvenir Preparation:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bharti Mathur*</td>
<td>JP Rama*</td>
<td>Nutan Malde</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All Past Presidents</td>
<td>Ajay Mehta</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Balloons:</th>
<th>Lights and Sound:</th>
<th>Treasurer:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vimla Dave*</td>
<td>Venu Sama*</td>
<td>Naren Hegneshwar*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V K Shah</td>
<td>Dev Sunkara</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decoration &amp; Stage:</th>
<th>Rath Yatra:</th>
<th>Front Cover Design:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Naren Hegneshwar*</td>
<td>Manoje Jain*</td>
<td>Surendra Jain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ricky Patel</td>
<td>Achyut Vadoothker</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Devotional Speakers:</th>
<th>Souvenir Advertisements:</th>
<th>Historic Photo Credits:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Surendra Jain*</td>
<td>Sam Mathur*</td>
<td>Surendra Jain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dipu Bhaumik</td>
<td>Geera Desai</td>
<td>Vipin Patel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Entertainment:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shefali Jain*</td>
<td>Sam Mathur*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neeli Jain</td>
<td>Geera Desai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prakash Gowda</td>
<td>Nilima Chaudhari</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* = Team Leader
VEDIC CENTER OF GREENVILLE PIONEERS
(Committees prior to 1987)

Ad Hoc Steering Committee:
Surendra Jain – Chairman
Indu Vakharia
H P Rama
Ramesh Deean
Chandu Chaudhari
Shashi M Rishi
P Krishna Reddy
J K Mehta – Secretary
Mukund J Desai – Treasurer

Program Committee:
Shashi M Rishi – Chairman
V K Shah
Sri Prakash Gupta
Bindu Mehta
Nilima Chaudhari
Ila Rama
Geera Desai

Fund Raising Committee:
J P Rama – Chairman
Ramesh Deean
Indu Vakharia
H P Rama
Surendra Jain
Shashi M Rishi
Chandu Chaudhari
R Krishna Reddy
Thakor Desai
Nayan Desai
Sri Prakash Gupta
Chiman Patel
Ajay Mithal
Narendra Kumar
Vijay Sabharval
Rashmi Mehta
Vish Mahajan
Anil Wagle

Construction Committee:
Krishna Reddy – Chairman
Raj Malhotra
Bharat Majmudar
Rao Damera

Constitution Committee:
Jyoti Bhushan – Chairman
Vish Mahajan
Vipin Patel
Ashvin Patel
R Krishna Reddy
The arrival of Indians in Greenville area began in 1964 when Surendra and Neeli Jain moved to Greenville to make it as their home. This year, the Jain family will celebrate fifty years of their stay in Greenville. During that time, there were some students from India who attended Furman University and Clemson University in the area. A notable student in 1968 was Shashi Rishi in Clemson, working on his PhD degree. He and his wife Vijay were frequent visitors to our small Indian community prior to 1970. Shashi Rishi started teaching at Greenville Tech from 1974. Vijay and Shashi also have made Greenville their home ever since.

By the end of 1970, based on our recollections, the families that made Greenville their home included Chandu and Nilima Chaudhari, Pravin and Geeta Desai, Ashwin and Usha Gandhi, Sucheta and Rajnish Jain, John and Vivi Mahiijani, Suresh and Jyotsna Patel, Krishna and Shashi Reddy, K P and Sarla Reddy, and Indu and Neela Vakharia. Out of this, Chandu and Nilima, Pravin and Geeta, Shashi Reddy, and Indu and Neela are still part of our community.

Greenville was a nice place to live then as it is now. Textile industry was predominant in the area. The second largest industry was perhaps engineering and consulting, with firms such as J E Sirrine (now Jacobs) and Daniel Construction (now Flour). General Electric opened its plant in the late 1960’s and attracted more Indian engineers to Greenville. There existed an International Club with members from different lands such as Switzerland, Italy, Greece, Germany, and Japan. The local citizens enjoyed getting together with this group to celebrate different occasions, their native festivals, and sharing of their native foods. The early Indians enjoyed their hospitality and became part of this group.

**Period of 1960’s:**
Until the late 1960’s, Greenville County was segregated. Blacks in the area were confined to the back of the city buses. They were not permitted to stay in hotels and motels for the whites, had to sit in the balconies in the movie theaters, and were not permitted to use the public libraries. The public rest rooms were separate for the blacks and the whites and so were the public schools. The school system was integrated in the late 1960’s.

From our discussions with the Indian families who lived in the area at that time, we found that the Indian community did not feel the effect of segregation, even though the local population did not know much about India or the Indian people. However, the local communities were interested in the Indian culture, and so the Indians were invited to share their faith, culture, background, and experiences with various church and other groups. They were well received everywhere and mixed well with the locals.

**Period of 1970’s:**
The 1970’s saw the influx of many Indian families in the area. In the early 1970’s, several families came to Greenville and Spartanburg as refugees from Uganda. The local Indian families welcomed these newcomers, made their homes available for them to stay, and helped them find jobs and places to live. Many of these families are still in this area and are a part of a thriving Indian Community.

Greenville (IAGG) was formerly organized. The constitution was written and was adopted by the community. The community started celebrating many religious and cultural festivals as a group. They used school cafeterias, auditoriums, Greenville Technical College auditorium, Furman University facilities, church fellowship halls and whatever other places they could find to celebrate Diwali, Navratri, Independence Day of India, and many other occasions. They showed Indian movies on portable screens, borrowing projectors from Furman University or Greenville Tech.

*(Continued on page 28)*
(History of Indians continued)
In the late 1970’s, many more families started moving in the area. Greenville had become a regional center for engineering and attracted professional Indians and their families during this period. Many physicians and hotel/motel entrepreneurs also settled in the area during this period. The Rama family became the first Indian family in the area as the hoteliers, and has made Greenville their home ever since. Many more hoteliers followed. Drs. Nayan and Geera Desai were the first Indian doctors from our recollections to join North Hills Medical Practice, which they still run as multi-specialty medical clinics. Records show that in 1978 there were some sixty families who were members of India Association of Greater Greenville.

On September 20, 1979, the India Association was approved as a nonprofit organization by South Carolina Tax Commission.

Period of 1980s:
The Indian families wanted a way to practice their culture and religious beliefs and pass them on to the next generation. The community also needed a place of its own to meet and celebrate the cultural and religious festivals. This necessitated a need for a community center. Thus the idea for the Vedic Center was born. Vedic Center of Greenville, South Carolina, was duly incorporated on June 28, 1983. Efforts had started to look for a suitable land for construction of the building.

An Ad Hoc committee was formed. Our records show that the first meeting of the Ad Hoc committee took place on August 13, 1985. The members who attended this first meeting were: H. P. Rama, Surendra Jain, Indu Vakharia, Shashi Rishi and Ramesh Deean. Prior to this meeting Indu Vakharia had located a five acre tract of land in Mauldin at the corner of Bethel Road and Bethel Drive. The cost of this land was $55,000. The committee approved the purchase of this land. Indu Vakharia was asked to handle the transactions and other due diligence responsibilities. Various sub-committees were formed during this first meeting. Fund Raising committee was chaired by J. P. Rama, Program committee was chaired by Shashi Rishi, Construction committee was chaired by Indu Vakharia, and the Treasurer responsibilities were handled by Mukund Desai. Many meetings were held by the Ad Hoc Steering Committee. Prior to the purchase of the land, there were discussions to locate the land convenient to Greenville and Spartanburg communities but was dropped.

The following is an excerpt from a newsletter published on August 14, 1985:
“Saturday, August 3, 1985 was a historic day for our Indian Community. A program was arranged by India Association to conclude a very eventful year. H. H. Sushil Muniji and his disciples delivered lectures on our religion in the U.S.A. During the meeting, the Ad Hoc Steering Committee was proposed to acquire a five acre tract of land for the construction of our center. Those who were present in the meeting unanimously approved the location and recommended the purchase of it. Muniji gave his blessings and encouraged the community to build this center soon _ _ _ _ _ _.”

At this meeting, more than sixty families pledged over $50,000 for the project. On Sunday, August 4, 1985, H. H. Sushil Muniji blessed the land of the Vedic Center by performing Bhoomi Pooja.

Several Committees were formed for the design and construction of the Center and to raise the funds. Many volunteers served in the various committees. They gave many hours of hard work, attended many meetings, and went door to door and out of state to raise funds under the leadership of J. P. Rama. A newsletter published on November 12, 1989 mentioned that there were 370 families and individuals, out of which 170 families had given or pledged donations. Finally the day arrived. On December 2, 1989, inauguration of Vedic Center of Greenville was celebrated. The Inauguration and Pooja ceremony were performed by Acharya Sudhanshuji of Chinmaya Mission in Chicago.
**Period of 1990s:**

Building a hall was not the main objective however. The community kept on striving to make it into a temple. Over the years following the inauguration of the hall, many meetings were held by the members of the Executive Committees and other volunteers to discuss the design of the temple, types and names of Murtis to be installed, and location and order of their placements on the altar. Krishna Reddy, Chandu Chaudhari, Indu Vakharia, along with other committee members, started the construction of the temple area in the existing building in late 1993.

After many meetings and heated discussions, selection of the Murtis was made. Placement of the Murtis was another issue that was discussed and debated. Swami Chidananda Saraswati resolved this decision and the placement of Murtis was done as it is now in the temple. The Murtis were ordered from Panday Murti Museum in Jaipur. During the first shipment, some Murtis arrived damaged and had to be reordered causing a long delay.

Finally our dream came true. Murti Sthapana at our Vedic Center was wholeheartedly celebrated from May 20 to 22, 1994. Dr. Kishoreji from the temple in Columbia and Pandit Maujiram Sharma from Siddhachalam in Blairstown, NJ performed the Murti Sthapana ceremonies.

A beautiful Shivling, carved from a large granite rock, was installed in the temple in 1995. This Shivling was brought in by Sudarshan Rishi. This was donated by Rishi family including Mataji.

Vedic Center of Greenville has indeed provided a place of worship to all Indians regardless of where in India they came from. The temple serves us all. It has brought unity among all of us. It has created a place where we and our children can socialize, meet, and eat together and practice our cultural and religious activities. •

---

**CONGRATULATIONS**

**Vedic Center of Greenville**

on

**25 Years**

of Preserving
Indian Religion and Culture in the Upstate!

**SOUTH CAROLINA | JUA**
Our Journey to Build the Ahimsa Hall
by Ragesh Pandya

Need for a larger hall for the Vedic Center was perceived because, with a growing community, the existing temple hall was getting too small for the religious and other community events such as Navratri, Annakut, and Havan. A decision was made to add a large hall adjacent to the current building. There were many skeptics, questioning the need for the hall as well as its proposed size. As it turns out, the visionaries had good understanding of the need.

As usual, we were short of funding. Budgetary numbers were put together and we contacted a few local builders. Many members of the Rama family, Nayan and Geera Desai, Surendra and Neeli Jain, me, Kaushik Patel, V K Shah, Late Shri Nanubhai Patel, the president and the executive committee of the Vedic Center, and many others were instrumental in supporting this major addition. Initially, our primary challenge was to answer the questions in order to satisfy the skeptics. We had to be very diligent in spending the money. The Rama family had pledged a large amount, $200,000, along with pledges from many others. To cover the balance, we planned to take out a loan. H P Rama made phone calls to Ken Harper at Greer State Bank and obtained a loan commitment from the bank. Architectural drawings were made by a firm in Charlotte, NC; JHM Hotels had a business relationship with this firm, which allowed us to avoid a large up-front payment.

After discussions with the builders, a decision was made to retain the services of Able Construction. After start of the project and receiving the first invoice from the builder, we realized that with this builder, costs will be much higher than expected. After many meetings to brainstorm and generate ideas on how to manage the project with the available funding, a decision was made to terminate the contract with Able Construction and find a different builder. I will not go into the details of the legal issues concerning this change.

We were fortunate enough to find Jerry Calloway of CEC Construction, and sign a contract with him; he had experience in building facilities like our hall, and was willing to work with us. The construction was being overseen by late Shri D P Rama, Kaushik Patel, and me, along with many others. An enormous amount of time, effort, and resources were invested by all of us in this project.

Once we started the construction, there was no turning back; we now had to focus on raising the additional funds needed. Fundraising was a difficult task requiring significant time commitment and effort. J P Rama, who had led successful fundraising efforts for the temple in the past, was once again asked to take the enormous responsibility of leading another fundraising effort. He masterfully planned and organized this task. J P Rama, Kaushik Patel, V K Shah, and me – we went door to door in the evenings to get pledges or to collect the funding. Surendra and Neeli Jain donated $10,000 to name the hall as Ahimsa Hall.

The hall was inaugurated in 2006. Numerous hours were contributed by many members of our community to build Ahimsa Hall. Looking back at all the issues, it was truly amazing that we were able to complete the project so well. The hall, once seen as of questionable usefulness by some, is serving the community’s needs well. With the large number of people participating in various programs, a smaller new hall would have outlived its usefulness long time back. The community in Greenville and surrounding area continues to expand, and we hope that the Ahimsa Hall will continue to meet our need for many more years.
## Presidents of Vedic Center Of Greenville

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>President</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>Vipin Patel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989-1990</td>
<td>J P Rama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991-1992</td>
<td>Nayan Desai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993-1994</td>
<td>M P Rama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Shashi Rishi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Narendra Kumar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Thakor Desai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998-1999</td>
<td>Sri Prakash Gupta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000-2004</td>
<td>Nanubhai Patel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005-2006</td>
<td>Kaushik Patel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>V K Shah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>Subhas Dhulekar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>Praful Veer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-2014</td>
<td>Shailendra Mathur</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thank you for your selfless service.
Walk in, Call in, Click in, or Drive in.

Now you’re into friendly banking!

Bank of TRAVELERS REST
SINCE 1946

Member FDIC

(864) 834-9031 • Toll Free (888) 557-2265

TRAVELERS REST • GREENVILLE
BEREA • GREER/TAYLORS • MARIETTA

www.bankoftravelersrest.com
1988: The Year When It All Started
by Vipin Patel

The land was selected. The first elections were held, and the constitution was written and adopted by the General Body. All that was needed was the enthusiasm and the funds to go ahead with building the center. Celebrations of our religious and cultural activities started towards fulfilling the dream of having our own center for worship.

The community came together to celebrate religious and cultural occasions by renting halls and finding ways to raise the funds. The celebrations included Dhuleti in Springfield Park in Mauldin, Janmastami in Heritage Lake Club House in Simpsonville, Navratri (all 9 days) in Simpsonville City Park Hall and Mauldin Cultural Center, Dashera in Greenville High School Auditorium, and Diwali in Knights of Columbus Hall on Mauldin Road, just to mention a few. The volunteer ladies of the community pitched in to help in making every occasion a festive event by cooking and serving delicious dinners to all – a very thoughtful contribution indeed!!

In addition, Musical evenings by Late Mrs. Behroj Chatterjee in Christ Church School Auditorium and great Indian devotional song singer Mrs. Anuradha Paudwal in Furman McAlister Auditorium were also organized to help generate more interest.

Donations were solicited and Bi Lo coupon selling drive was started to get some more funds towards the goal of having our community and religious center.

In a short time, we had collected sufficient funds to clear the land at our present site and to do Bhumi Pujan for the building. The plans were drawn, engineers from our local community devoted their time to design the building and the internal service systems. The building contractor was selected and the journey of the life time began for our center.

So Proud to be Part of the Community!

Ajay & Ruby Mahajan

Twinkle & Neha
McChesney & McChesney, P.C.

Helping with Social Security Problems.

We are a phone call away.

1-800-775-3985

or

864-582-7882
Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

Anniversaries are wonderful, magical, celebratory occasions. May we extend a warm word of welcome to you all at this – our Vedic Center of Greenville 25 years anniversary celebration of Devotion & Unity.

Anniversaries are opportunities for recollections of the year gone by and positive reflections for the year ahead. These past years have been happy and successful years in many ways. They have been defined by a kaleidoscope of happy memories, supportive friendships, and enduring relationships. Of course there have also been some paths that may have been slightly more difficult to travel together. Yet in spite of the odd stumbling blocks along the way, we have traveled through yet another year – together, supportive, encouraging, and enduring.

As we take the time to express our gratitude for a fantastic year gone by, we turn expectantly to the year that lies ahead. We look forward to another wonderful year – a time to build and strengthen forged relationships even further; a time to create and cherish even more shared memories and a time filled with dreams that are brought ever closer and milestones – whatever they may be – achieved.

Temple has become a vital center for the arts, education, and service work. It is here that the traditional forms of music and dance can be performed, enjoyed, and passed on to future generations. Well-intentioned individuals can gather here to embark on projects of good will and social justice. The temple is an important cultural resource for our community, not only for the youth but for the adults as well. Through yoga, meditation classes, and spiritual discourses, it offers us all the opportunities to engage with our cultural heritage in a deeper, more significant way. Tonight, as we celebrate our 25 Years of Devotion & Unity anniversary, I value even more, the special people that we are able to share this occasion with. It doesn’t matter where you go in life or what you achieve, or what you do – what matters most is who you have beside you along the way!

My biggest accomplishment is not to be shy and overcome my fears to talk to the people. Overcoming my weaknesses and believing that I can always do everything I wish to do with my life because He strengthens me.

Thank you – one and all – for being beside us this past year...and may you be ever near in the years ahead.

With Best Wishes

From Pankaj, Parul, Rohan & Rhea Patel

ARMAN CONSULTING
Process Control & Systems Integration

www.armanci.com
Jay Shree Krishna,

I am thankful to all my friends and supporters for helping me fulfill our dream of building our own temple. For the past 25 years, we have helped all the Vedic Center presidents in many different projects. When our hope for the temple were shattered in 1987, after a meeting in the hall rented from Hejaz Shrine club in Mauldin, and realization of the Vedic Center was deemed impossible, we organized a meeting at North Hills Medical Center – with inspiration from Neelima Chaudhary and Ramesh Deean – to elect the first ever elected committee for our Vedic Center.

Initially, when more funds were needed, we started Bi Lo Coupon Drive through which we were able to raise more than $50,000 for the temple; I thank you all for helping me in that project. We also started giving the annual Flu shots, which helped us realize more than $15,000 profit for our temple.

Geera and I are fortunate to have helped in different projects under my leadership as well as that of Vipin Patel, J P Rama, and M P Rama. These projects include extending the temple hall, ordering the Lords’ Murtis from Jaipur, India with Surendra Jain, reordering the replacement Murtis for the ones damaged in transit, and finally, Murti Sthapna in May of 1994.

I am thankful to all my friends and volunteers for organizing many dance festivals and Garba competition year after year, keeping our culture and heritage in the forefront; I am also thankful to them for organizing Akhand Ramayana at the Ramnavami time, with help from all the devotees.

Finally, we have come a long way from a small prayer hall to the larger temple hall and Ahimsa Hall with full kitchen facility. Again, I and my wife are proud to be part of the Vedic Center. With help from all of you, we will embark on new projects to ensure success for the future generations. In doing the work for Vedic Center, if Geera or I have hurt anyone’s feeling, we would like to offer a sincere apology. We would love to have everyone join together for celebration of this milestone in our lifetime – the 25th anniversary of our own Vedic Center!

As said in Ramayana:
Jaha Sumati Taha Sampatu Nana
Om Shanti Shanti Shanti.
Nayan Desai •

"Everything that is done in the world is done by hope.”

-Martin Luther

CONGRATULATIONS
TO
VEDIC CENTER OF GREENVILLE
FOR 25YRS OF ACHIEVEMENT

93 Quick Stop
Gas Station
(C Store - Liquor Store - Laundry)
(864) 855-3626
602 Liberty Drive
Easley, SC 29640

Toprani Family
Surendra & Asha
Rupa & Jeff     Amit & Sonia
Sonal, Mark, Roshan & Leela
Bullard
We are happy to celebrate

Silver Anniversary of
Vedic Center of Greenville, SC

ॐ नमो भगवते तस्मै यतू प्रत्यावर्तयतात्मकम् ||
पुरुषायादि वीजाय परेशायानि धीमहि ||

Malaina, Amaya, Divia & Kedar
Hansraj, Ellora, Rae & Suneer
Kaumudi (Kume) & Vipin Patel

Vedic Center is an asset to Indian Community, we are proud of it.

Congratulations on its 25th Anniversary Celebration

Raj and Rani Dhillon
My Recollections  
by Shashi Rishi

The memories of 60’s and 70’s are still so vivid and intact, we used to come from Clemson to Greenville to watch Indian movies on 16 mm. projection, shown at Greenville Tech and Furman University. We borrowed the movies some times for $25 to show to the Indian community at Clemson.

There were a small number of Indian families in Greenville and we were about 20 Indians including the faculty and students at Clemson. We arranged programs like “India Day” and invited Dr. Edward Jones for his famous lecture/slide presentations to expose our American friends to the arts, culture, and history of India. Many of our friends used to think that when you land in India you would see snake charmers and cows on the street. Such was the image of India.

In the late 70’s and 80’s, we organized Indian Festivals and Cultural Programs in Greenville by renting schools, colleges, and church facilities, seldom we would get the same facility again because we did a very poor job in keeping it clean.

We realized that we needed to build a religious and cultural center to preserve our ethnic identity and culture and to pass it on to our children. We wanted a place we could call our own. I joined forces with some of my other friends who had similar visions. We knew our community is blessed with prosperity and affluence. We had talent, vision, energy, and resources. All we needed was a commitment to work hard towards the realization of our goal. We invited Swami Chinmayananda and Swami Sushil Muniji to Greenville Tech to bless our mission and energize our campaign.

In 1985, An Ad hoc Steering Committee was formed to raise funds, arrange religious programs and purchase land for the center. The committee consisted of the following members: J P Rama, H P Rama, Surendra Jain, Ramesh Deean, Chandu Chaudhari, Mukund Desai, Sri Prakash Gupta, P Krishna Reddy, R Krishna Reddy, and Shashi Rishi. The committee met on a regular basis for about two years. We ultimately did build the Vedic Center in 1989.

In 1995, we made many improvements to our center. We put a beautiful curtain and a new floor in the alter area. We remodeled the bathrooms, put tiles at the entrance and built a new kitchen with an exhaust system to meet the OSHA requirements. This was made possible by generous donations from Nayan Desai, Andy Agarwal, Surendra Jain, Suresh Dalmia and other members. Indu Vakharia spent many hours in getting all the work done.

We also paid off more than $37,000 of the loan balance to make our center debt free.

In 1995, a renowned Swamiji from India visited our Vedic Center, and commented that it is a beautiful temple but it lacks a Shivling and the temple would be incomplete without it. He suggested that we should install a Shivling in the center of the Alter. I asked my brother in India if he could get it custom made and arrange to send it to us. The Shivling was carved beautifully from a single piece of Granite. My brother Sudershan Rishi brought it personally and stayed here to see it installed. Krishna Reddy worked very hard to complete the project. Installation of the Shivling was a matter of great pride and satisfaction for my family, my brother and Mataji, who was a great devotee.

“The starting point of all achievement is desire.”

-Napoleon Hill
Congratulations and Best Wishes on 25th Anniversary of Vedic Center of Greenville

From Gajanan, Pramila, Jyoti, Ashish, Meenu, Nitin and Anika Shanbhag.

Best Compliments from Kaushik & Preeti Patel

Don Pilzer
ATTORNEY AT LAW

SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY REPRESENTATION

(864)235-0234
TOLL FREE (800) 518-0234
300 UNIVERSITY RIDGE, SUITE 100
GREENVILLE, SC 29601
P.O. Box 10557 F.S.
GREENVILLE, SC 29603

don@donpilzer.com
Fax: (864) 233-0584
Happy 25th Anniversary Vedic Center of Greenville

“karmaṇy evādhikāras te
mā phaleṣu kadācana
mā karma-phala-hetur bhūr
mā te saṅgo 'stv akarmaṇi”

From:

The Shanbhags: Gajanan, Pramila, Jyoti, Nitin, Ashish, Meenu, & Anika

The Potdars: Anand, Usha, Neelam, Rahul, Parul, & Ishika
My Perspective
by Sri Prakash Gupta

We moved to Greenville in 1972. There were about 50 Indian families in Greenville and vicinity at that time. For many years, we used to do Akhand Ramayan with Dilip Mathur, Shashi Rishi, and Mataji at our homes; Nayan and Geera Desai also joined us. We also used to conduct religious and cultural activities at places such as schools and churches because we did not have our own place.

We had a dream to have our own place for our religious and cultural programs. About 25 years ago, we purchased about 5 acres of land to build our center at the present site. We did Bhoomi Pooja at the site. The temple was built and Murti Sthapna was done in May, 1994. In 1997, I became the president of the Vedic Center and we got the parking lot paved. We also planted many trees and completed landscaping to beautify the temple. We ordered a lot of religious books from India for our library. We conducted Balvihar for our children so that they could learn about our religion and culture.

We had a plan to expand the center. The Ahimsa hall was built to accommodate more than 500 families for social and religious events. We are fortunate to have Panditji Srinivasan Bhattar to perform the daily religious activities. We are proud to have our own temple for the Indian community today and for the future generations to come.

"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others."

-Mahatma Gandhi

BEST COMPLIMENTS & NAMASTE
FROM
BEST WAY MOTEL

1304 Poinsett Hwy
Greenville, SC 29609
(864) 271-1780

CHAMPAK & MADHU PATEL

Thank You Vedic Center for guiding us through the last 25 years.

Best Wishes for continued success!

from
Chandu and Nilima Chaudhari
Hands That Serve Are Holier Than Lips That Pray

HIS LIFE IS HIS MESSAGE...MESSAGE FOR ALL OF US TO EMULATE...

178 W. Main Street
Spartanburg, SC 29306

Free Consultation
Help is just a phone call away!

CALL 800-543-2990
When I assumed the position of the president of Vedic Center, I noticed that our community was deeply divided and the number of families paying the annual dues was down. To resolve these issues, I developed the following three point agenda:
1) Re-unite the community
2) Provide transparency in our accounting
3) Increase membership of the Vedic Center

Following were our key achievements related to this agenda during my tenure:
- By the blessing of God and support of our community, I was able to tackle the difficult task of organizing, for the first time, the Diwali function in collaboration with IAGG, thus bringing the two organizations closer.
- We provided quarterly accounting of the Vedic Center finances through the regularly published News Letter. We ensured that the accounting was comprehensive and clear to understand.
- We were able to get a large number of community members to pay the annual maintenance dues. The numbers of families that paid the annual dues surpassed 320.

I am happy that we could make significant progress, create harmony, and develop positive environment with our efforts.

In addition, my committee and I organized the following events during our tenure:
- Paid off approximately $500,000 to the bank to reduce the Vedic Center debt. This was a major accomplishment, and we are proud to make it happen.
- Organized and managed two Katha events: Ramayan Katha and Bhagavat Katha. Both the events were time consuming but very rewarding for the devotees.
- Organized two summer youth camps at the Vedic center.
- Organized a bus tour for our senior citizens to visit several temples in Atlanta.
- For the first time, organized Health Fairs at the Vedic Center during both years.

During this time, we also made the following facility improvements:
- Installed drapes on the Ahimsa Hall stage.
- Purchased PA system for Ahimsa hall.
- Installed sprinkler system to water the lawn.
- Improved Bathrooms and tiled the entrance area.

By the grace of God, we had very active and eventful two years. I thank Vedic Center for giving me the opportunity to serve.

Best wishes to
Vedic Center of Greenville
on their
25th Anniversary

Amul & Kasmira Patel
In memory
Of
ANIL SHANBHAG

by Geetha and Vaman Shanbhag

Best Wishes
for the celebration of
25th Years Anniversary
of the
VEDIC CENTER OF
GREENVILLE

From:
Dipankar, Navanita &
Debanjan Bhaumik

Best wishes to
Vedic Center of Greenville
on their
25th Anniversary

Dr. Priya Vasudevan,
Anand Jaganathan,
Smirthi and Satvik.
Ph# 864-990-4740
I am very happy to know that Vedic Center of Greenville is celebrating its Silver Jubilee year in 2014. What a fantastic achievement!

My salutations & respect go towards the Founder Members, Pioneers, Community Leaders, past and present Committees, and the friends & families of Greenville Community who selflessly contributed to this phenomenal vision called “Vedic Center of Greenville”.

When we look at these 25 years gone by, it is apparent that this vision has transformed into a reality. Since its formation, Vedic Center has grown in leaps & bounds by including almost every Community member into its fold. It is a matter of great realization that Vedic Center has touched every family’s life by provisioning multiple aspects of Indian culture as expected by our community.

Personally, it was indeed a great honor & privilege for me to serve Vedic Center of Greenville and our Community during 2008-2010. During this period, Vedic Center witnessed significant additions and activities, as follows:

• Priest installed in the Temple for the first time in 20 years
• State of art Kitchen was established in Ahimsa Hall
• Wi-Fi facility, New Music System and Wooden Stage were installed in Ahimsa Hall
• Sports were promoted by conducting Children Sports Camps, Volleyball court creation
• Collaborated with Campersdown Academy to start Cricket forum at their ground which was provided free of charge
• Collaborated with Regional cultural organization to host new festive programs of Pongal and Onam
• Collaborated with IAGG and local cultural dance organization for Vedic Center fund raisers
• Library was commissioned

I, along with my family, Aparna, Jhilmil and Simrita, who have been integral part of Vedic Center activities congratulate all at Vedic Center & sincerely wish for its phenomenal growth in the days to come.

I also congratulate President Shailendraji, his wonderful committee members & everyone for planning & celebrating 25 successful years of Vedic Center.

“Wherever you go, go with all your heart.”

-Confucius

South Carolina’s only Indian 100% Pure Vegetarian Restaurant

Since 1996

Highly Acclaimed restaurant serving Greenville since 1996

Serving North & South Indian Cuisine

Every dish at Swad is cooked to order with tender loving care. We pride ourselves in preserving the tradition of Indian food, and is prepared the way it should.

We make sure that your palette is satisfied...

Come to SWAD and get a first hand experience.

1421-A Laurens Road • Greenville, SC
Reservations: (864) 233-2089
Building a temple requires dedication, commitment and determination. Due to the hard work and perseverance of the community in Greenville, we made it happen after many years of efforts! For the past 25 years, we all have been proud owners of the Vedic Center.

Nayan and I feel very fortunate and privileged that we were able to be part of the process from day one. There were many obstacles and hardships in the process; ultimately, with much help from our community and the volunteers, our hard work paid off. Being in charge of the religious events and calendar for the past 25 years has been a privilege for us. We sincerely thank each and every one of you that has helped us along the way.

Each year, we celebrate many different religious events in Vedic Center. We start in January with Balaji Abhishekm, followed by Mahashivratri. We then get to celebrate Holi, the festival of colors. In the following months, we organize programs for Ramnavami, Akhand Ramayana Path, Mahavir Jayanti, Gauresh Chaturti, Janamashthmi, Navarti, Annakuta, Tusli Vivah, Kalyan Utsav, Sahastra Diya Puja, Suvarna Pushpa Puja, and Ratha Yatra. Mahavir Jayanti is graciously organized by our Jain community. Suvarna Pushpa, Sahastra Diya, and Ratha Yatra were started by our Priest, Bhattarji.

I would like to note that the temple was maintained for many years by our beloved Late Shree Nanukaka and Vijya Baa until 2011, when Bhattarji came. I would like to thank the Late Shree Nanukaka and Vijaya Baa, to whom we will forever be indebted for their dedicated service. Since Bhattarji’s arrival, we have had regular Poojas and services at the temple. We would like to thank Bhattarji, his wife Saraswathi, and his two sons Madhav and Rishi. Bhattarji has gone above and beyond the call of duty with his dedication to our temple. He brings enthusiasm and positive attitude to our community and has become an integral part of our family. He is dedicated to our temple and has helped raise revenues for it.

Financially, we have had our fair share of struggles. On that note, I would like to recognize the individuals who assisted, as well as the programs that helped us achieve the financially secure state that we are in today. The programs that helped us get to a fiscally secure state are:

- **Behroz Chatterji Musical Nights**
- **Devotional Programs** by Hari Om Sharan, Shree Purshottam Jalota, Purshottam Upadhyaya and Arunada Podwal.
- **Fogna Dance Competition** – Special thanks to the Furman Faculty, Dr. Jones, Mr. Sam Britt, Mr. R P Rama, Mr. M P Rama, and Mrs. Ramila Desai

As our community grew over the past years, we needed additional space to accommodate the increasing number of devotees. To that end, Ashima Hall was built. We had a huge state of the art kitchen project designed by D J Rama. The project, which cost over $150,000, was graciously funded by Denu and Ramila Rama, Dipak and Hema Patel, and Nayan and Geera Desai.

I would also like to note the following events over the past years that have helped financially support our temple:

- **Bhagvat Katha** by Shree Bhupendrabhai Paynda in 2007, sponsored by Shaunak and Hema Dalal, Satish and Rashmi Kinariwala, and Nayan and Geera Desai. A special thanks to Sushilaben Rana, who cooked for 7 days and did not charge the Vedic Center. This event resulted in a net income of $20,000 to the Vedic Center.
- **Ramayana Katha** by Shree Bhupendrabhai Pandya in 2010, sponsored by Nayan and Geera Desai, resulted in a net gain to Vedic Center of $99,000.
- **Bhagavat Katha** by Shree Rameshbhai Oza in 2011, when Praful Veer was the
President. I would especially like to thank and acknowledge Mr. D J Rama and Mr. J P Rama, who worked diligently and travelled many miles to raise money for this event. We raised $350,000 from this event, which put the Vedic Center in a very secure financial state.

- **Shivapuran Katha** by Shree Bhupendrabhai Pandya in 2013, sponsored by Nayan and Geera Desai. Net income from this event was $93,000.

- **Discourse on Hanuman Chalisa** by Shree Bhupendrabhai Paynda in 2014, sponsored by Nayan and Geera Desai. Net income from this event was $40,000.

I would like to acknowledge our countless volunteers – there are too many to name. The hard work, dedication, and enthusiasm that these volunteers bring every day make the Vedic Center the success it is today. I would also like to acknowledge Shoba and Achyut Vadoothker, Bharati Metha and other Balvihar teachers; over the last 25 years, they have dedicated a large amount of their time to educate our youth.

I would also like to give special thanks and recognitions to the volunteers who take care of the Murtis in our temple. The Vastra backdrop and jewelry have all been generously donated by the ladies of the Vedic Center. Changing of the Vastra is time consuming and takes hard work and commitment. I would like to give special thanks to Rashmi and Satish Kinariwala, Shaunak and Hema Dalal, Bhamini Kinariwala, Sumati Deean, Savita Patel, and Shibani Contractor, for dedicating their time and effort to this task.

For the last twenty five years, Vedic Center has celebrated Annakutta which feeds about 700 people. This huge event is wholly supported by the ladies of the Vedic Center. A big thanks to all of them for their time and dedication.

Over the years Vedic Center has grown and become the success it is today. I would like to give a special recognition to the individuals who have gone above and beyond the call of duty. These individuals have helped make the Vedic Center what it is today. A special thanks to the following:

1. Ila and J P Rama
2. Geeta and H P Rama
3. Daxa and R P Rama
4. Neeti and V K Shah
5. Purnima and Jayanti Patel
6. Chandrakant Patel
7. Dikshaben Patel
8. Kusumben Patel
9. Mansi and Ragesh Pandya
10. Ashok and Daxa Patel
11. Ketan and Ragi Shah
12. Naresh Kumar from India Palace, for generously donating his time and food for Ganesh Chaturthi for the last 25 years
13. Kashmira and Amul Patel
14. Lata and Manubhai Patel
15. Preeti and Kaushik Patel
16. Geeta Desai
17. The late Kirti Desai and Nitin Desai
18. Sudhir and Nita Patel
19. Madhu and Naren Vivek
20. Jignesh and Manisha Gandhi

That being said, the biggest thanks I have is to all of you, our Greenville family. We have all worked hard and now can see how our hard work has paid off! Here is to the many more years of prosperity!*

*"Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love."

-Mother Teresa
Best wishes to
Vedic Center of Greenville
on their
25th Anniversary

Anoop and Nomita Joshi

JAI SHREE KRISHNA
Best Wishes
AND
Congratulations to
Vedic Center

Pravein & Geeta Desai
Pragna, Nirav & Nikhil
Nitin, Shruti, Forum,
Komal & Bhavik

For All Your Real Estate Needs
Residential or Commercial

Contact: SHASHI RISHI

864-877-8666 (Office)
864-525-2457 (Cell)

Email: shashirishi@aol.com

With Best Compliments
from
Janak & Pragnya Desai,
Shrimayi(Nicki) & Satyam
Vashi
and Shivam Desai.
In 2014, I celebrate 50th anniversary of my life in Greenville. I feel very fortunate today that I made Greenville my home in 1964. Of course, I did not realize how much I would appreciate Greenville when I arrived here. Coming from Bombay and attending College in Philadelphia – both big cities – it was like coming to a village where there was not much to do, especially since there were no Indians to socialize with and share my culture and language. The life then was lonely!

Before long, I joined the Jaycees of Greenville which had other members in my age group. We were all involved in the community service and worked together to make Greenville a better place to live. We worked hard on different community projects, got to know each other’s families well, and socialized with each other. Becoming a part of the Greenville community was probably the best thing I did. We were all in our 20’s and it was hard to say at that time what the future held for each of us.

This group of Jaycees was a progressive and hard working group. Several of its members became well-known citizens of Greenville. Two became governors of South Carolina, one became mayor of Greenville, one later became United States Secretary of Education, two went on to become real estate tycoons, and so on.

Another organization Neeli and I joined was International Club of Greenville. It had members from several European countries and from the local community. Food, dancing, and learning each other’s festivals and music was a lot of fun. Gill Rowland of Greenville News and his wife Clay, and Dr. Ed Jones of Furman and his wife Beth Evans were a part of the International Club. I remember they all gave me a bachelor’s party in early 1965 when I was going to India to get married. They also gave me rice to throw during my wedding ceremony, which I did.

For the Indian touch, we found some Indian professors in Clemson who would come over to our house on the weekend to socialize and play bridge. With that small group of Indians, our home became a central place to socialize and celebrate.

We were delighted to see other Indians moving to Greenville around 1968. Diwali was typically celebrated in our home until 1984; we had over 100 people that year. We would have Diwali Pooja, dinner and fireworks, which the children enjoyed. All the Indians in town were invited.

Our son Manoj was born in 1968; he was the first Indian born in Greenville. I vividly remember being in a party with the local friends that night, when Neeli started having labor pains. I took her to the hospital while our guests cleaned the dishes and vacuumed the house before they left. Dishwashers were not common then.

In 1980, I joined Rotary Club of Greenville and served as its president in 1994-95. I am still a member of the club. This gave me an opportunity to serve the Greenville, National, and International communities.

There is so much I can add, but my message to the Indian community in Greenville is the following. We are all fortunate to make United States and Greenville our home. This is the land of opportunity. While we are reaping the rewards of our hard work we also have obligations to make our community a better place. We are a part of two cultures, Indian in which we were raised and American in which we live now and in which our next generations will live. Our friend and my mentor Max Heller, past mayor of Greenville, spoke to us once and gave us a message that said, “This is the only country where we can practice our religion, our culture and our festivals but we are Americans”.

With above said, I want to congratulate all the members of our community on the 25th Anniversary and thank all who have dedicated themselves to the success of the Vedic Center and the Ahimsa Hall. •
“Serving Apartment Property Owners Management needs throughout the Southeast”

Patewood Plaza
30 Patewood Drive
Greenville, SC 29615
864-297-6971
Fax 864-288-6167
My Recollections of Our Vedic Center
by Chanud Chaudhari (Member of the first Construction Committee & Trustee)

We are all preparing to celebrate 25 years of Vedic Center. Well, actually, as I recall, it all started in 1982……… About 7 years before the inauguration of the Vedic Center.

Community members from greater Greenville area and Spartanburg area got together and discussed about building a cultural/religious center for all folks of Indian origin. It was suggested to build a center (common to both cities) in between Greenville and Spartanburg (may be somewhere in Greer) so it will be equally accessible to both the communities. The combined plan did not materialize and both communities eventually developed their own centers.

The initial organization included an Ad-Hoc committee with few major sub-committees. There was the ever-important Fund-Raising committee, there was the Religious committee, and there was the Construction committee. We used to meet on a regular basis in JHM’s office on South Pleasantburg Drive. Mr. J K Mehta was our official Secretary. He did a wonderful job keeping the Minutes of the Meetings.

I was fortunate enough to be able to join the First Construction committee. We met with a few construction companies and got some ideas. At that time it was decided that due to our very limited budget, we should consider a simple Butler Building which we can be enhanced later on as funds became available.

We could not afford to solicit architectural services, so I drew up the first plans which included a 40 ft X 80 ft butler building, elevation views from all the sides, and the inside layouts. We took the drawings to one of the well established and well-known construction firm (Threatt Maxwell) and obtained their quote. One of the major issues was where to place the building on the land. It was very important to have internal layout so that the Murties would face east.

The committee considered various names for our center. We already had India Association of Greater Greenville established, which gave our community Ethnic Identity. We were looking for “Cultural Identity” which would represent all people (all religions) from India. The name “Hindu _____” was rejected because we wanted to represent all religions from India, not just the Hindus. The name “____ Temple” was rejected because we wanted to meet the needs of many different religions from India, not just one particular Murti. As far as I recall, H P Rama proposed the name “Vedic Center” and it was accepted by all the members.

There was a dedicated group of people who were assigned the task of drafting the Constitution for the Vedic Center. I recall voting on two basic requirements – No Meat and No Alcohol on the Vedic Center property.

I recall there were many discussions about which Murties to have in Vedic Center. Also there was a lot of discussion about where to place the various Murties inside the Vedic Center, and which Murti should be at the Center. I believe a well-known Swamiji finally guided us in these decisions.

As anticipated, the Fund-Raising committee had the most challenging task. Many different venues had to be explored to raise the funds. One of the venues was to create different categories of Life Memberships. This helped the cause to some extent. Like many other community members, I remember making each individual member of my family a Life Member. Many individuals and most of the committee members also provided the much needed Interest-Free Loan to the Vedic Center.
A few months ago, Surendra Jain called and told me that this year would be the 25th anniversary of the inauguration of Vedic Center building. He had called a meeting to discuss the planning for this special event. In the subsequent meetings at Vedic Center, he had volunteered to chair the 25th Anniversary Celebration Committee. He was the right choice since he had been involved in the activities of Indian community since the middle of 1960’s. Surendra asked me to write about the history relating to the establishment of Vedic Center, since I was also working with him along with many other volunteers since 1971. He also asked me to be in charge of getting the souvenir book to be published for this occasion. He and I along with many other volunteers were involved in the community activities. In those days, we had just a few Indian families who had made Greenville their home.

I had saved a lot of information related to the activities of our community from the past. Surendra Jain, Shashi Rishi and J P Rama and some other members also had their folders and boxes with handwritten notes and articles from those early years. Going through my archives, I found handwritten notes, announcements of meetings, and their minutes, names of speakers who spoke in various meetings and many other documents. It looked like I was organizing and conducting many such meetings. After sorting through my information, I met J P Rama in his office and went through his stack of saved papers from that time. We found minutes of meetings from 1985, copy of an original contract to purchase land, copy of the incorporation of Vedic Center of Greenville, Inc. We also found records of pledges made by members, funds collected through November of 1989, just prior to the inauguration of Vedic Center. We also found articles published in Greenville News and India Abroad news weekly.

I am making references to these existing records for one simple reason that we should properly archive these records for the future generation. These records show that how many people devoted their time and money to make our Vedic Center a reality. While writing the article on “History of Indians in the Upstate and Establishment of Vedic Center” I listed many other details of the efforts by the community to build Vedic Center and other existing facilities. It was also a privilege for me to locate the land we now have and also the involvement in drafting the constitution of the Vedic Center and also the construction of the building.

After the purchase of the land in 1985, the Ad Hoc Committee kept meeting during 1986 and 1987. The minutes of the meetings show that several subcommittees work on design of the center, on efforts to raise funds, and organizing many cultural and religious activities. There was a lull in the planning within the Ad Hoc Committee during 1988 with the exception of fund raising, dreaming and praying for this center to become a reality. Most of the design work of the Vedic Center took place in early part of 1989 with the construction effort closely following. Our Center was inaugurated on December of 1989. What an accomplishment after 4 years of planning.

The rest is the success story of the growth of the Indian community in the Greenville area. Our center has been expanded, temple was built and Ahimsa Hall constructed and our efforts continue to improve our facilities. Unlike many other cities and communities in the USA, our community has stayed united without making any partitions based on regional and cultural differences. The Vedic Center and India Association of Greater Greenville have worked together for many cultural activities and supported each other for the efforts to promote harmony and welfare of our community. As we continue for many more years to come, I am hopeful that the Indian community and our future generation will make more efforts to get involved in the larger community where we have made our home.
Caring for Smiles
One person at a time

Sangita Vakharia, dmd
General & Restorative Dentistry

www.haywoodsmiledesigns.com

864.286.9822
1190 haywood road
Greenville, SC

Congratulations to the Vedic Center on your 25 years in Greenville!

Best Compliments

From:

Vijay & Alka Patel
Best wishes to
Vedic Center of Greenville
on their
25th Anniversary!
Hemen & Deepali Dattani
Atul & Rita Desai
Shri Prakash & Tulsi Gupta
Minesh & Shilpa Patel
Yogendra & Subhadra Sharma

25th Anniversary!
A celebration of
Faith & Unity,
as bright and enduring
as Silver.
Jatin & Ragini Shah
Anand Shah

Best Compliments
From
Pankaj & Vimla Dave
Oh what a journey…the time has come to celebrate the silver jubilee of our dear Vedic Center! In watching the center grow to what it has become today, I feel like it has helped me grow 25 years younger!

I had the distinct honor of being the first treasurer of the Vedic Center committee before it was ever constructed, and after serving seven years in that position starting in 1984, I stepped down once the Vedic Center was built and opened its doors to our Greater Greenville & Upstate Community in 1990.

There are so many memorable events and moments that took place during my tenure of seven years and have happened for the many years after; However, I wanted to highlight the following few happenings from the early going, that some of the newer generations & migrants to the community may not be aware, that really made me proud to be part of the executive committee team:

- The start of Bal Vihar classes for children. These classes taught our children the Hindu religion which actually offers the “Ideal Way to Live Life”. My hat goes off to Vipin Patel, a past President of the Center, and Bharat Majmudar, a member of the executive team, both of whom initiated these classes and started holding them every weekend at their homes as the center was not yet built. What a sacrifice for such a fundamentally great cause!! Our children have definitely benefitted from this over the years.

- Vedic Center Consumer Drive (more popularly known as VC Consumer Drive). The champion for this cause was Dr. Nayan Desai who was the Vice President of the center at the time. Nayanbhai struck a deal with our local Bi-Lo grocery chain whereby the Center would buy coupons in bulk and then re-sell them to our community members. In turn Bi-Lo would give Vedic Center a 7% commission. This cause benefitted the center greatly, as it not only generated a significant amount of the seed funds to construct the building, it also helped fund running operating expenses. Nayanbhai believed in this campaign so much, no matter what the occasion- wedding, funeral, baby shower, birthday party- he would be there selling the coupons…What a commitment and dedication to a great cause!!

- Another item of notable mention is how the programs were conducted before the center was built. Various venues were used, such as churches, club houses, community halls, etc. However, all of these programs were sponsored by members of the communities and not a single program was held where the Center had to bear the cost. These financial sacrifices by community members also aided in helping the Center raise funds to get it built. So a very big Thank You needs to go to all that had a hand in making this vision a reality.

While there are so many more memories during my time on the committee, and after I stepped down, I am proud to have been a part of the center from its inception. I have enjoyed watching the hundreds and thousands of contributions to the center over the years, and I look forward to watching the center grow & flourish and will continue to proudly support it. Dear Vedic Center, Happy 25 Years!!!

“The future depends on what we do in the present.”

- Mahatma Gandhi
Best wishes to
Vedic Center of Greenville
on their
25th Anniversary

Vipin and Vaishali Chikhliker

Wishing Vedic Center
many more.

So proud to be part
of such a wonderful
community.

Rajesh & Sapna Mahajan
Shivani & Shubham

Best wishes to
Vedic Center of Greenville
on their
25th Anniversary

Atul Desai

John P. Taylor, Jr.
Wealth Insurance Specialist
(864) 467-2831

John P. Taylor, Jr.
Wealth Insurance Specialist

Wells Fargo Advisors, LLC
Member FINRA/SIPC is a registered
broker-dealer and separate non-bank
affiliate of Wells Fargo & Company.
Insurance products are offered
through our affiliated non-bank
insurance agencies.

Wealth Brokerage Services
15 South Main Street, 2nd Floor
MAC D3310-026
Greenville, SC 29601
Direct: 864-467-2831
Fax: 864-467-2846
john.p.taylor@wellsfargo.com
In November 2009, twenty years after its inception in 1989, Vedic Center was blessed with its first Pujari, Shri Archakam Sreenivasa Bhattar, who brought sanctity to all temple activities.

Pujari Ji / Pandit Ji / Bhattar Ji, as he is lovingly referred to, was initially faced with the challenging task of satisfying and winning the hearts of a very diverse and cosmopolitan community whose roots traced back to different parts of India, speaking different Indian languages and following different customs. Bhattarji, through his linguistic skills of English, Hindi, Telugu, Kannada, and Tamil, was soon able to earn the respect of our community members. His proficient services included diverse worship programs that aligned with the patrons’ devotional interests. His services during the annual religious events and festivals like Dashera, Navaratri, Diwali, Shri Rama Navami, Shivaratri, Krishna Janmashtami, Balaji Abhishekam, Balaji Kalyanam Utsav, and many others, have made these events much more meaningful to all.

Vedic Center is proud to have a true Purohit and to utilize his services for many Hindu rituals like Pranapratistha, Satyanarayan Katha, Engagement and Marriage ceremony, Shastipurthi, Grihapravesham, Thread ceremony, Groundbreaking ceremony, as well as those related to birth and death.

Panditji’s initiation and organization of events such as Rath Yatra, Swarna Pushpanjali, Sahasra Deepam, and Yagnas have become annual highlights in the temple for devotion, spiritual solace, and enjoyment to all segments of our community.

The Greater Greenville Indian community holds Bhattarji in high esteem with his wife Shrimati Saraswathi, who also contributes both directly and indirectly to our community through worship activities, preparation of Prasad, making garlands for deities, temple decorations and a number of other activities.

With his on-site residence, the temple has become open and accessible from 9:00 am – 12:00 noon and 5:00 PM – 9:30 pm in weekdays with extended timings in the weekends and during the festivals. Spiritual services and various Pujas can be sponsored by individual patrons and families, and can be performed at the temple or at their homes. Cost associated with services can be found at the website www.vediccenterofgreenville.org.
KATHRYN WILLIAMS
ATTORNEY AT LAW

ON THE JOB INJURIES

• Workers’ Compensation

Including
- Back and Neck Injuries
- Head and Brain Injuries
- Social Security Disability
- Auto Accidents
- Long Term Disability

FREE INITIAL CONSULTATION

235-6254
619 N. Main St. • Greenville, SC
Toll Free: 1-888-377-1537
www.kathrynwilliamspa.com
I want to write about the community volunteers dedicating their time and showing their unselfish devotion to the Vedic Center. These volunteers, ladies, men, and children, show the feeling of belonging towards the Center through their actions. Whether it is celebrating a religious or a cultural activity at the Center or just plain lending a hand to any family’s needs, these volunteers have been ready to give their all.

After Murti Sthapana, a group of ladies regularly cleaned the altar and changed the clothing of the Murties prior to different religious holidays. The entire look of the Murtis was always eye catching.

These volunteers were always there to arrange the tables and chairs, serve the food, attend the front desk for any and all functions, pick up the trash and clean the Center. The children did their part by providing entertainment and singing Bhajans at the major functions. Of course, the dedicated Balvihar teachers must be credited for sowing the seeds of our religion and cultural heritage in these young minds. Balvihar was started with just 3 children and due to continuous services of some Balvihar teachers for many years, it now has more than 50 children attending every Sunday. Some of the previous students have become very successful professionals. These teachers have to be commended for their unselfish services.

Of course everybody is mindful of the delicious dinners that were cooked and served by these volunteers. The Center even organized Ladies Luncheon to appreciate their hard work.

When the Center was in need of funds, these volunteers organized Dance Festivals in which, groups from surrounding states communities participated along with the young children from our Center. Long hours of hard work were routine for these people.

And these volunteers stayed away from officially being on any committee and served in the background. We owe them a very sincere appreciation and “Thanks”.

These are our Unsung Heroes; they are inspiration to our future volunteers.

"Honest disagreement is often a good sign of progress.”

-Mahatma Gandhi

Best wishes to
Vedic Center of Greenville
on their
25th Anniversary

Mina & Ravi Doshi,
Raj, Priya, Rupal
and Prashant Udeshi
Vedic Center - A Positive Influence
by Pragnya Janak Desai

Prior to 1996, I never had an intimate relationship with my local temple due to the distance from our home. Upon moving to Greenville, I was excited to learn that the Vedic Center was so accessible. The first time I visited Vedic Center was during the Maha Shivaratri celebration. I still remember my amazement when looking at Abhishek of Mahadev and its intricacies. The beauty of each idol’s dress, ornaments, and decorations moved me and I instantly began to feel at home and closer to God.

Because many recently immigrated families are busy establishing themselves in America, the Vedic Center has continued to fulfill the vital requirement of passing down our Indian culture and values to their children. As my children were growing up, they regularly attended Vedic Center’s Balvihar to learn about our Hindu religion and culture. They learned about Ramayan, Mahabharat, and various Bhajans; they also eagerly looked forward to the annual Vedic Center festivals such as Navaratri, Annakut, and Holi.

All the age groups, from young to old, are encouraged to participate in Aarti, prayers, and other rituals at our temple. Activities like Spiritual Speakers, Katha, Gita lessons, Yoga, and Health Fair are regularly organized at the Vedic Center. The friendships and the welcoming environment of the Vedic Center community are the things my entire family has come to cherish over the years. Because of its role in our lives, the Vedic Center was the first choice for hosting my daughter’s marriage functions.

Our first generation of immigrants has worked very hard to build our temple by offering donations, time, and unrelenting talent. We love our Vedic Center community and it is now our responsibility to carry this tradition with continued dedication and service.

Best wishes to
Vedic Center of Greenville
on their
25th Anniversary

Dr. Sriramkumar & Seema, Kishan

Lord, Supreme Truth,
We aspire to know Thee and to serve Thee.
Help us to become children worthy of Thee.
And for this, make us conscious of Thy constant gifts
So that gratitude may fill our hearts and govern our lives.

-The Mother

Best Wishes from:
The Family of the Late Nanubhai Patel
Vijyaba, Narendra Vivek, Madhu, Bhavin, Nisha, Bhavnesh & Sayli
Congratulations!

from Govind, Kavita, Amit and Ravi Rughani.

Best wishes to
Vedic Center of Greenville
on their
25th Anniversary

Dr. Gurpreet and Vimi Maur

My Memories of Vedic Center
by Angele Rishi

My first memories of the Vedic Center date back long before we ever broke ground. I remember my parents taking me to a Puja in the woods where the Vedic Center would one day be built. I was only six years old then. Although I remember it vividly, I could not understand the magnitude of the endeavor upon which our parents were embarking – to build a temple for generations to come that would facilitate carrying on our religion, culture and traditions. I remember the many long years of fundraising it took to make the dream of the Vedic Center a reality. I remember the sense of pride I felt, even as a young girl, when I entered the Vedic Center for the first time and stood in awe and reverence of the beautiful Murtis. I remember bringing my American friends from school to join in our Navratri celebrations and Garba. I also have fond memories of my college professor from Emory coming to the Vedic Center to give a lecture on religion.

Over the course of 25 years, these memories are just the tip of the iceberg. What they signify is something many in my generation share – the Vedic Center personified and brought to life my religion and heritage right before my eyes. For me, it fueled a desire to learn more about Hinduism and reflect on what it means to be a Hindu, beyond memorizing prayers and performing rituals. Trying to understand how to achieve moksha and practice detachment and renunciation in the modern world of today is a daunting task for anyone. However, the Vedic Center gave me the opportunity to educate myself, which is a good first step on a long journey of self-discovery.

As I reflect on the past, it forces me to think about the future and my own children. I am incredibly grateful to my parents’ generation for their vision, courage and perseverance to build temples like the Vedic Center. It serves as an invaluable link for future generations in this country to their culture, heritage and religion. The Vedic Center is not only a spiritual destination; it is a landmark and symbol of our strength, devotion and faith as a community.
It was a typical Sunday for this Hindu-American girl. All of my Christian, Jewish, and Greek friends were busy having a religious family day. I was bored and a little jealous. My best friend would tell me about her youth group activities like ski trips, cookouts, and “lock ins”. She was learning about her faith in a fun way. All I had was the daily Diva (Diya) with Mom – place an offering in God’s dish, light the Diva made out of a cotton ball soaked in Ghee, and say a prayer. These few minutes with Mom were very special, but I still wanted a little more.

Little did I know that my parents and other Indian parents felt the same way. One day, Mom and Dad told me that we were going to look at a property for our temple. As all teenagers, I did not want to go out with my parents. Not cool! But I was curious to see if the Indian community would actually pull together to create a place of worship and learning.

The car ride seemed to take forever. Back then, places were more difficult to reach. We pulled up to an overgrown lot and parked on the street. Our only religious figure at the time, Swamiji, was wearing a Dhoti and Chapals. He held the traditional prayer/offering items: a coconut, Diva, Tika paste with rice, and a Prasad plate. He had no problem tromping into the overgrown lot to find the perfect spot to bless the ground.

I had no intention of getting my legs scratched and bitten by the bugs, but my parents pulled me into the lot. I was looking for a place to stand because I did not want to get dirty, but once again, my parents made me sit. While I was sitting and listening to Swamiji say words that I could not understand, I felt a sense of peace come over me. It felt like we had found a place to belong to.

Of course, that peace was interrupted by all the fundraising activities and disputes about what the temple would look like. Many evenings, we would sit in the lecture halls at Greenville Tech to hear our parents talk heatedly about the plans, the budget, and the Murtis. Some of my friends contributed their allowances, but our contributions did very little in the grand scheme of things. At least we contributed even though we would not be the ones to take religious education classes at our temple.

It took a few years to complete the temple during which time, my friends and I went to the college. I was amazed when I first saw the completed building. It actually looked like a place of worship! The grounds were manicured, the Murtis were in place, and the people were praying. What a great accomplishment for a small community! I felt happy and excited for the younger children. They had a place they could go to on Sundays. They could have youth groups and trips just like the other religions. They no longer were left alone on the Sunday afternoons.

---

Best wishes to Vedic Center of Greenville on their 25th Anniversary
Haresh & Meera Baxi, Kyati, Khanjan, Samir
The Vedic Center is a tribute to our culture and heritage but it is mainly a tribute to our willingness and determination to work together.

I am so thankful to be born, raised and living with such a devoted community and thank all who have dedicated their time and efforts in building and maintaining such a wonderful place for us all growing up here to worship and meet together. In my mind we are all a family, not just a group of people belonging to the same culture.

Best Wishes and Love,
Manoj Jain

Best wishes to
Vedic Center of Greenville
on their
25th Anniversary

Manoje & Shefali Jain,
Harshita, Chirag

Asking for HELP isn’t a weakness.

It may be the STRONGEST STEP you ever take.

The Carolina Center
For Behavioral Health

Psychiatric and substance use disorder treatment for adolescents, adults, and senior adults.

When you need us:
864.235.2335
thecarolinacenter.com
CONGRATULATIONS TO

VEDIC CENTER

ON THEIR 25TH ANNIVERSARY

With Best Compliments:

V.K. & Neeti Shah

Shilpa, Chris and Kiran Noll

Shetal and Sean Coyer
Aside from our home, the Vedic Center has probably been my greatest source of memories, learnings, and culture. I played Indian games like Kho-Kho at the overnight camps there. I was taught about ancient history, religion, and yoga at the weekly Balavihar classes. I learned to dance at Navratri. I had the opportunity to start experiencing public speaking and performing as a little kid at the Mahavir Jayanti programs.

My two families first joined together for our wedding Sangeet there. When you leave home for college and explore the world, you have the chance to see how different communities exist. I have noticed, as have friends we’ve brought home from college and family who came for our wedding, that Greenville has an Indian community that is unique in how everyone comes together. The Vedic Center been the source and center for that community. It has evolved a lot from when it was a large room to gather in when we first moved to Greenville and we got to experience that with the memorable Murti Stapna and addition of the Ahimsa Hall.

Twenty-five years is just the beginning of the many many years that the Vedic Center will continue to serve as that center for community and culture.

“What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us.”

- Ralph Waldo Emerson
25th Anniversary Celebration 1989-2014

Please Join Us
for some great
Chinese Cuisine

1149 Woodruff Road
Greenville, SC
(864) 675-9898

Reflections on Vedic Center
by Shalini Bumb

For years, I've been going to the Vedic Center – whether it was for the Balavihar classes, Jain camps, Garbas, Pujas, or even my own graduation party. So many of my fondest and most precious memories took place at the Vedic Center. It is the place where I come to find peace and pray to Bhagwan. It is the place where I have learned about my heritage and culture. It is the place where I have interacted with what I now call as my Greenville family.

I was there for the Murti Sthapana ceremony of our Mandir in 1994, and now that we arrive on the 25th anniversary of our community's cornerstone, I realize how much I have gained, how many meaningful experiences I have had, and how much the Vedic Center means to me.

With Best Compliments from:
Mukund and Vilas Doshi
Tejas and Vedhas
Hema, Bryan & Simran
Neha & Brian

Best wishes to
Vedic Center of Greenville
on their
25th Anniversary

Kanta & Navenkumar
Impact of Vedic Center  
by Nikhil Bumb

As an Indian growing up in South Carolina in the 1990s, to say we stood out would be an understatement. If you were lucky, there might another Indian student in your class, but more than likely you were the only Indian in your grade and one of a handful in the school. For me, the Vedic Center is a place where I first found community and did not feel like an outsider. Attending the Balavihar classes every Sunday provided this sense of community on a regular basis and, though I often failed to realize it at the time, taught me core values and about my cultural heritage – things that I cherish today and rely on constantly.

Having lived in many other parts of the USA now, especially those with a high density of Indians, the other aspect of the Vedic Center that really stands out is its ability to bring together and be a pillar of all Indian communities whether Hindu, Jain, Sikh, Gujarati, Telugu, Tamil, Brahmin, Bania, etc. In many other cities, the Indian communities have been divided among these lines but, even as the Greenville Indian community has grown rapidly, the Vedic Center has continued to bring individuals and families across all the communities together first as Indians, and facilitated celebrations of all styles of worships and festivities.

Greenville has a truly unique Indian community and at its center stands the Vedic Center. Thank you to the Vedic Center and all of the dedicated Uncles, Aunties, and other community members (especially the Balavihar teachers) who have gone above and beyond to build a place that I will always be proud to call home!

"Information is the currency of democracy."

- Thomas Jefferson
Wishing Happy 25th Anniversary

to

Vedic Center, Greenville, SC.

कर्मष्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन।
मा कर्मकल्पतुभरूः मा ते सहस्त्रकर्मिणः॥ २-४७

You have the right to work only but never to its fruits.
Let not the fruits of action be your motive, nor let your attachment be to inaction.

Mukesh Gandhi MD., P.A. Internal Medicine.

409 East Georgia St. Woodruff. SC 29388.

Phone: 8644767068

Website: gandhiinternalmedicine.com
We wish Peace and Tranquility for the Community so we can keep on enjoying the fruits of hard work of some elder members, who initially saw the need for the Vedic Center. Our hearts and prayers go to these pioneers who saw the vision for the Vedic Center. Now the Upstate community of South Carolina is blessed and reaping the benefits of Vision.

Initially, there was no Gurdwara in our area to serve the Punjabi Community—Vedic Center was the place where we were welcomed to celebrate our religious Paths (Poojas). Temple management was always gracious to us. Very few people can appreciate how privileged we are to have a community like that in the Greater Greenville Area.

There were no places large enough for us to have Sikh Religious services (Path) except the Vedic Center.

Finally with the Grace of Wagheguru and the support of Upstate South Carolina communities, the Punjabi Community was able to build a Gurdwara at 111 Harrison Road, Duncan, SC.

Everybody regardless of religion and social status are welcome at the Gurdwara. Services are held on second and fourth Sundays. Anybody can sponsor the Gurdwara Path and Seva.

We are proud to say that the people who donated funds generously for the Gurdwara construction are the member of the Vedic Center.

We, Gurams, have a special place in our heart for the Vedic Center.

May Almighty God bless the Greater Greenville Indian Community!
"Children are not vessels to be filled, but lamps to be lit" - Swami Chinmayananda

Greenville Balvihar first started in a living room in September 1992 when a few dedicated families in the community came together to teach our younger generation about Hindu traditions and philosophy. As interest grew in the community, Balvihar relocated to the Vedic Center and became the class we recognize today. Gaurangbhai Nanavati of Chinmaya mission came to the Vedic Center to teach the Bhaja Govindam in summer of 1992. While teaching philosophy, he encouraged the community to inspire our children at an early age. He explained that our younger generation must achieve identity, learn our traditions and practices, and become familiar with our culture and philosophy. He believed that this would sustain and enrich them no matter where they went in life.

Balvihar’s first teachers were the parents of the children involved. This small group quickly grew to a large group of dedicated volunteers who excelled at many subjects, including music, yoga, and history. These teachers enthusiastically taught many age groups. The first group of teachers included Shobha Vadoothker, Sumathi Nathan, Geera Desai, Hardika Patel, Bharati Mehta, and Ajay Mehta. Achyut Vadoothker came to talk about specific topics and later became a regular teacher. Some of these teachers have continued with Balvihar today, although many new faces have joined the teaching tradition of Balvihar.

Balvihar’s first literature originated from the Chinmaya mission and Arsha Vidya Gurukulam. These books helped the teachers set up a curriculum to guide the class and better reach children of different ages. In a typical Balvihar class today, the students first learn prayers, Bhajans, and Shlokas for 15 minutes. They then participate in a 15-minute Hatha Yoga session and breathing exercises to promote health. The next 45 minutes are dedicated to storytelling, discussion, songs, games, arts and crafts, and Balvihar alphabets in the age appropriate groups. Our youngest students are 4-5 years old, and our oldest have been seniors in the high schools. The older group mostly engages in discussion, sharing experiences, reading from history, and various scriptures to help the students build character and confidence and to encourage them to find their own path in life. The whole class then comes together for the final prayers before completing the day.

All teachings at Balvihar emanate from scriptures such as the Mahabharat, Ramayan, Bhagavatam, Bhagavat Geeta, Puranic stories, Jathak Katha (tales), and Indian history. These teachings were coupled with examples of great Indian leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi and Lokamanya Tilak, and poets such as Vyasa, Valmiki, and Kalidas. In general, the class follows the public school year and holiday schedules. Students often participate in festivals and events at the Vedic Center and learn related background stories.

Children at Balvihar have not only learned about the Vedic traditions and practices; they have also engaged in sleepover camps, dramas, games, Shloka competitions, jeopardy, and many more fun activities. These activities have allowed them to learn in an interactive environment and also allowed the older students to plan and organize events to teach their peers. Local Indian doctors have come to teach the children about health and wellness, good food habits, and good general hygiene. The fire department and emergency services have come to demonstrate their services and ambulance care. All activities have been designed to enhance the children’s knowledge, understanding and memory of our culture, philosophy, and history in a fun environment.

Balvihar’s original group of students graduated in the early 1990s and 2000s. They went on to become successful members of our society in the professions such as teaching, engineering, medicine, law,
business, management, accounting, and computer science. All have come back and expressed their fond memories of Balvihar and confidence in their education of our culture and philosophies. Balvihar has enriched the lives of a generation of young Indian children in Greenville and hopefully will continue to do so for many years to come.

Editor’s note:
Prior to the current Balvihar, Bharat Majmudar had started Balvihar classes in the spring of 1988 at his home, moving the classes to the Vedic Center in 1990. There were six students in the 8 to 12 years age group, and three students in the 5 to 7 years age group. Chinmaya Mission Balvihar curriculum was used, including religious stories and prayers for both groups, and Geeta chanting for the older group. These classes were continued until 1992, when Bharatbhai moved out of the area. The current Balvihar was started a few months later.

Wishing Vedic Center many more years for Imparting religious knowledge to our children And enjoying all religious activities and social events.

Rishi, Reena, Rita & Ashok Desai
25th Anniversary Celebration 1989-2014

With Best Compliments

From

FOOTHILLS RHEUMATOLOGY, P.A.
AMIR AGHA, M.D., F.A.C.R.
Arthritis & Osteoporosis

2000 E Greenville St Suite 2700
Anderson, SC 29621
(864) 716-6030  FAX: (864) 716-6039

138 Milestone Way
Suite B
Greenville, SC 29615
The Vedic Center is just amazing. In this article I will tell you how amazing the great temple is. My name is Jaimeen Shah; I have been coming to the Vedic Center for such a long time, and I can’t imagine my life without this Mandir. This temple has been another home for me; it has allowed me to meet some of my best friends and has taught me so many lessons. Now let me tell you about a few ways the Vedic Center has changed my life.

One of the ways it has changed my life is it conducts Balvihar from which, I have learned so much about my religion, tradition, culture, and life lessons. Also, this temple has celebrated so many of our Indian holidays and festivals; these events have been so pleasurable. The third way the Vedic Center has changed my life is it has connected me with so many people of my culture in the Greater Greenville area. This has introduced me to different foods, different languages, and different prayers. The last thing the great Vedic Center has done is it has allowed me to meet with some of my best friends. The temple brings together so many kids and we get to know each other so well, we become great friends.

These are a few of the ways the Vedic Center has changed my life. And just like me, the Vedic Center has changed so many peoples’ lives in a positive way. I can’t imagine my life without the Vedic Center.♥

"The important thing is not to stop questioning. Curiosity has its own reason for existing."

- Albert Einstein
My name is Dhriti Shah and I am 13 years old. I came from India to the US a year ago, and joined Balvihar one month after I arrived.

I am always excited to attend the Balvihar classes because I love to learn all the new Bhajans, Shlokas, lessons of life, and much more. Whenever I come to Balvihar, it makes me feel like being in home. It gives me a feeling that I am in India sitting with my grandparents or parents learning something new about religion and great lessons of life. Recently, we learned the Aarti Jay Jagdish Hare, and how our good and bad deeds can affect us.

According to me, Balvihar is the platform which keeps our rich Indian culture and heritage live in a country like USA.

Finally I would like to thank all the Balvihar teachers namely Vipul uncle, Prashant uncle, Achyut uncle, Bharti aunty, Meenu aunty and Shobha aunty, for their efforts to keep Balvihar a growing and enjoyable experience.

“Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn.”

-Benjamin Franklin
Congratulations to Vedic Center on its 25th Anniversary!

Visual Graphics has enjoyed working with Vedic Center for its printing needs.

VISUAL GRAPHICS
COMMERCIAL PRINTERS

Business Stationery • Pocket Folders • Postcards • Catalogs • Direct Marketing • Brochures • Flyers
4 Color Process Printing • Full Bindery Services • Foil Stamping & Embossing • Layout and Design

Call us at 864.233.2845 • www.visualgraphicsonline.com
GANESHI
Ganesha is the Lord of success and destroyer of obstacles. He is also the god of education, knowledge, wisdom and wealth. It is customary to begin the religious and cultural events by worshipping Ganeshji.

SRI RAMA WITH LAXMAN, SITA, & HANUMAN
Sri Rama is the seventh incarnation of Lord Vishnu. His life is an example of equanimity and adherence to Dharma despite the harsh tests, obstacles, and difficulties. He is example of the ideal man, the perfect human, and is known as Maryada Purushottama (Lord of self-control and Lord of virtue).

SRI KRISHNA WITH RADHAJI
Sri Krishna, an incarnation of Lord Vishnu, is the central figure of Mahabharata and Bhagavad Gita. The story of Krishna’s childhood is crucial in the development of Hindu Bhakti or devotional tradition. His immortal discourse of Bhagavad Gita was an exposition of yoga and how an aspiring seeker might seek union with God.

GODDESS DURGA
Durga is the Devine Mother of the Universe, who represents the infinite power of the universe and is a symbol of female dynamism. Durga is one of the many forms of Shakti, the supreme goddess. Durga was created as a warrior goddess to fight a buffalo bodied demon, Mahisasura.
**LORD SHIVA**

Lord Shiva is a part of the trinity (creator, sustainer, and destroyer) in Hinduism. He is the destroyer. His purpose for the destruction is to make way for a new beginning. Shiva is most commonly depicted in meditating pose on the Himalayas. Shiva is also called Bhola Nath (highly trusting). When angered, Shiva opens his third eye, which causes Pralaya (total destruction).

**SRI VENKATESWARA**

Venkateshwara is an incarnation of Lord Vishnu. He is also known by names such as Srinivasa and Balaji. Venkatesh means ‘the lord who destroys the sin’. Sri Venkateswara has a dark complexion and four hands. He holds Chakra (discus) in his upper right hand and Shanka (conch shell) in his upper left hand. He may be the only God worshipped by devotees of both Shiva and Vishnu.

**MAHAVIR SWAMI**

Mahavir Swami is the twenty-fourth and the last Tirthankara of the current era in Jain religion. He preached that right faith, right knowledge, and right conduct together will help attain the liberation of one’s self. At the heart of right conduct lie the five great vows: Ahimsa (nonviolence), Satya (truthfulness), Asteya (non-stealing), Brahmacharya (chastity), and Aparigraha (Non-possession). Jains hold these vows at the center of their lives.
Bhoomi Pooja

*Swami Chinmayanandaji*

*Shri Sushil Muniji & disciples*

*Ahimsa Hall Bhoomi Pooja*
25th Anniversary Celebration 1989-2014

Events & Facilities

Swami Chidananda Saraswatiji

Balvihar

Pujyashree Ramesh Oza

Pujyashree Bhupendrabhai Pandya

Ahimsa Hall

Vedic Center

Decorated for a wedding

Kitchen
Best wishes to Vedic Center of Greenville on their 25th Anniversary

Sonia Karamchandani - Toprani

Our hearts are filled with gratitude towards Our beautiful temple, Vedic Center On it's 25th Anniversary Jai Shri Krishna Jai Ramji

from:
Rajni & Raksha Desai
Sachin, Nisha, Sahil & Shayla Desai
Supal, Paresh, Mayan & Riya Patel
DONORS WHO MADE DREAMS A REALITY – OUR VEDIC CENTER

The institutions like ours exist because of the visions of pioneers and because of philanthropists who donate their time and money for such causes.

From the available information, the Vedic Center of Greenville received over $3.5 million in donations over last 25 years from many community people, not only from Greenville, but from many from surrounding communities and from many out of state people.

The following members of our community collectively have donated over one million dollars. We salute them from greater Indian community for their generosity. They are:
- The Rama Family (JP, HP, MP, DP, and RP Rama) (DP Rama is no longer with us today)
- Drs. Nayan and Geera Desai
- Mr. Surendra and Neeli Jain

There are numerous other donors who contributed the balance of the funds for the Center that made it possible for the facilities we have today and are celebrating 25 years of its existence.

From JP Rama’s archives, we found a spread sheet dated 11/10/1989 that listed names of donors and the amounts of pledges and donations received until that date.

Since we are writing the history, we thought it would be of interest to show some numbers that were in the spread sheet:

- Total Pledges Received $155,713.00
- Total Donations Received Prior to 12/31/87 $59,649.00
- Total Donations Received in 1988 $35,874.00
- Total Donations Received in 1989 $30,295.00 (As of 11/03/89)
- Total Donations Received as of 11/03/89 $125,818.00

Total of 171 families donated this total amount from $50 to the highest amount of $6,122.

This shows that how many people of our community were involved to make our dream a reality.

We give a big “THANK YOU” to all who cared.

“We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.”

-Winston Churchill
CONGRATULATIONS TO

VEDIC CENTER

ON THEIR 25TH ANNIVERSARY

WITH BEST COMPLIMENTS

Dr. SUSHIL AND RENU MITTAL

(NORTH HILL MEDICAL CENTER)

Sagar             Teja             Sushil
Tahmida           Shruti           Renu
Now that we have our temple (Vedic Center) and a fellowship hall (Ahimsa Hall), the dreamers have started dreaming for the future projects in order for us to make full use of the existing facilities, improve on them and provide venue for the present and future generation of Indians to continue celebration of our culture and faith.

The future projects are listed below, not in any chronological order, and are not all inclusive:

1. Pujari’s Residence
2. Beautification of the Entrance to Vedic Center
3. Protection Fence around the property
4. Tiles for the floor
5. Nav Graha Sthapna
6. Kalash on the top of the building for appearance
7. Sound transmission barrier from the neighborhood homes
8. Playground Area for children
9. Improved Landscaping and Lighting

The projects listed above will require funds. This will give opportunities to members to sponsor some of these projects individually or collectively. The list can also be expanded as we come up with more ideas.

There are some other projects that should be considered for the betterment of our members and improve our relations with the community we live in. Some of these ideas are:

1. Education Foundation (Scholarships to students)
2. Guest Speaker Committee and Funds (Invite speakers to inform and enlighten members)
3. Health Related Committees and Funds
4. Charitable Foundation (Funds for needy projects here and in India)
5. Language Classes (For children as well as adults)

These are some of the projects that should be considered by the members and the executive committees of the future. This will require participation by many volunteers, young and old.

"Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn’t do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover."

- Mark Twain
Congratulations to the Vedic Center of Greenville!

We extend our gratitude and appreciation to the Vedic Center for serving the community of Greater Greenville for 25 years.

We are proud to be a part of an organization that continues to bring this community together.

Best Wishes,
The Deean Family
Best compliments from Drs. Nita and Santosh Bijoor and family
V-Go C-stores with gas

Ken Patel
President

V-Go transport

55 Park Woodruff Dr.
Greenville
SC 29607

V-Go gas & fuel

Indian Groceries & C-Store Merchandise

Dev Patel
Phone: (843) – 224-4740
Email: dev@vgomarket.com
Web: vgomarket.com

Supplying NC, SC, & GA

Krut Patel
Phone: (864) – 990 – 8908
Email: krutpatel720@gmail.com
Web: vgogasandfuel.com