

## Report Labor Day Patrons' Vedanta Retreat II 2012



The Labor Day Patrons' Vedanta Retreat II was held at Saylorsburg PA from August 31<sup>st</sup> to September 3<sup>rd</sup>.

It was a large gathering. Approximately 500 adults and 120 children participated in this camp. Pujya Swami Dayanand Saraswati expounded the fifteenth verse from Bhagavad Gita Chapter 15. Pujya Swamiji held satsang sessions every day. Swami Tattvavidananda continued his discourse on Ayodhyakandam from Valmikiramayana. Suddhatmaji taught chanting. Pandit Mukesh Desaiji conducted music classes. Maharajapuram Sri Ramachandranji presented a concert and Savithri Auntie presented a children's cultural program. Yoga classes were available during the camp.

Registration was complete during the day on August 31<sup>st</sup>. In the evening Suddhatmaji held the orientation. Suddhatmaji explained the schedule for the camp and the facilities available at the Gurukulam.

Pujya Swamiji taught verse 15 of Chapter 15 from Shrimad Bhagavad Gita. It is on Purusottamayoga. Lord Krishna says he is in the heart of every being. A person feels he is limited because he is ignorant of this knowledge. There is a total order in everything in the universe. There is an order in Dharma. The Lord is manifested in everything as the Knowledge. So

Krishna who is Iswara says I am the knower of everything, I know all Vedas, I am the author of Vedas, I am the knower of the knowledge and I am that knowledge. The knowledge is that every being is limitless. Pujya Swamiji explained Lord Krishna's this teaching with various illustrations with a profound clarity.

Pujya Swamiji held satsang everyday and answered questions from the students.

Swami Tattvavidananda Saraswati continued the Valmikiramayana from last camp, the Patrons' Vedanta Retreat I. Swamiji taught the Ayodhyakandam which is about Bharata's visit to Lord Rama. Lord Rama is in exile. The verses are in the form of questions to Bharata from Lord Rama but they are intended to advice Bharata about the qualities of a good king. Lord Rama advices Bharata how a king should act, perform his duties and have good relationship with his subjects. Swamiji said Ramayana was a majestic epic, a poem and an expression of love. Swamiji said that Ramayana glorifies the dharma and that life is a simple truth but it is difficult to live. He said that one should ask questions and think. One finds his own answers. It is knowledge. The advice Lord Rama is giving to Bharata is not necessarily for the king, it is for all of us.





Swamiji conducted guided meditation every day.

On September 1<sup>st</sup> Ramchandranji presented a delightful Carnatic Music Concert enthralled the campers. Everyone appreciated the presentation.

It was a large gathering of children. The children were divided according to their ages as juniors, seniors and teens groups, for the purpose of teaching. Teachers Lance Daniels, Rajana Deshmukh, Angie. Shreya, Jayanthy, Janani and Swami Vilasananda taught various classes.

On September 2<sup>nd</sup> Savithri Auntie presented a children's cultural program. About 60 children participated. In the Junior group the children performed a tableau depicting how so much can be learned from the nature. The senior children presented a new approach to 'Dasavataras' as suggested by Pujya Swamiji. The teen group presented a short play carrying the message 'God is our constant companion'. A dance was also presented by girls based on the AIM for Seva Anthem 'Bharat Desa Hitaya'. It was a delightful evening. Everyone enjoyed the program.

Suddhamtmaji taught the chanting on Durga Suktam.

Pandit Mukesh Desaiji taught the Indian Classical Music. For this camp Panditji presented Raga Kedar, a beautiful evening raga in teen (3) taal and sixteen beats. Kedar is an enchanting raga and it was a pleasure to learn and hear it from Panditji.

The kitchen staff works hard to serve good food to the large gathering and meals were served on time.

Pujaris Sri Ravichandran and Sri Ganesa performed the pujas regularly. Suddhatmaji and the staff, the teachers, and volunteers worked hard during the camp and to make it an enjoyable event.

This was the last long weekend of the summer. The Gurukulam was full of campers, children and visitors. All had gathered to be entertained by renowned artists and to learn from Pujya Swamiji and Swami Tattvavidanandaji. It was all achieved so very well during this camp.

Suddhatmaji thanked all Patrons for their continuous support to the Gurukulam for last twenty Six Years.

The camp ended on September 3<sup>rd</sup> 2012.

"Report by Arvind Bagat"