Hindu temple emerges in Carbondale

Matt Daray
Daily Egyptian

Carbondale is now home to the only Hindu temple in southern Illinois.

The Hindu Temple and Cultural Society of Southern Illinois held the grand opening of the temple from Friday until Sunday. The temple will provide the only formal place of worship for Hindus in a 120-mile radius. For decades, Hindus of southern Illinois worshiped in smaller groups at each other’s houses or would travel to St. Louis or Nashville, Tenn., for services. Now, more than 160 Hindu families and almost 100 Indian SIU students will have a local place of worship.

Pradeep Reddy, a pediatrician in Marion and president of the temple board of trustees, said the temple will be a large asset to the southern Illinois community.

“This is going to help all the Hindus at SIU as well as southern Illinois communities,” he said. “The location was chosen for Carbondale keeping in mind the students, there’s a large population here who have no access to St. Louis or other temples.”

Reddy led the movement to create a temple in southern Illinois, donating three acres of land for the temple to be built on. Reddy said the idea for a local temple was thought up in a small worship group he was a part of five years ago. He said it took two years to collect enough money from donations and manpower to build the temple.

The temple will help Hindus in the region get more in touch with their faith, Reddy said.

“Hinduism as a religion is not as much going to church every Sunday,” he said. “It is more of a way of living as opposed to formalized rules and regulations. So it helps access to those Hindus to get back to their roots, retouch and kind of understand and practice on a daily basis.”

The opening of the temple drew the attention of many locals, including SIU faculty and administration.

University President Glenn Poshard said the temple is an accomplishment for all Hindus in southern Illinois and shows their dedication to their faith.

“Out of the freedoms that we cherish together, is the freedom to worship in a faith of our choice,” he said. “Here in this city, in this region, in this country, we take that very, very seriously.”

Mayor Joel Fritzler said the temple helps Carbondale stand out as a diverse city in southern Illinois.

“This is awesome in my opinion. It just shows the community how diverse a population Carbondale has,” he said. “As we all know, Carbondale, we are an island in southern Illinois representing every religion in the world.”

Meera Komarraju, associate professor of psychology, said the temple allows Hindus the ability to practice their faith and gives locals a chance to learn about the faith.

“At least for the students of the university, especially when they come from India, it’s an opportunity for them to stay in touch with their faith,” she said. “And I think for people not of the Hindu faith, if they were to visit the temple, they’d get a flavor of a different religion.”

The Hindu temple is located at 1209 E. Walnut St. in Carbondale.

Temple hours are: 7:30-10:30 a.m. and 5-8 p.m. Mon-Thurs; 9 a.m.-7 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

Hindu priest Ramakrishna Mahankali of India, holds a flame in front of a hindu idol Sunday during the final day of the inauguration of the Hindu Temple of Southern Illinois in Carbondale. The flame is part of the Arati, performed at the end of worship, where the priest receives the blessing of the gods which are then offered to the worshippers. Mahankali, along with four other visiting priests from around the United States, participated in the religious ceremonies during the grand opening of the temple. Pradeep Reddy, president of the temple board of trustees, said the turnout for the event far exceeded his expectations.

Trey Braunecker
Daily Egyptian

The university offers a variety of online classes for students who do not have the time or opportunity to complete classes on campus.

Online classes give students the option to pursue an education from almost anywhere they want, said Dan Musa, director of Computer-Aided Math Instruction and a visiting assistant instructor of mathematics.

He said the convenience of completing credit hours without having to step into a classroom helps students fulfill academic requirements for graduation, while still giving them the freedom to work on other projects outside of the university.

Musa said the math department first started offering online courses last summer when it needed a college algebra course. He said since then, the university has broadened its range of online classes, offering courses such as intermediate algebra, contemporary mathematics and business calculus.

“Since we started offering more classes, we have seen a sizable number of students register for online classes this summer,” he said. “We offered all of these same classes online during the spring semester, but we have noticed even more students have enrolled for classes this summer.”

Across campus, the university has increased the amount of online courses offered from 79 in fall 2012 to 118 this upcoming fall. This summer, the university is offering 68 online classes. Summer 2012 online course numbers could not be obtained from the admissions office.

Musa said most of the students who take online courses are often in towns surrounding the university such as Du Quoin or Marion when they sign up, so they do not want to be tied down by a classroom for the semester.

Some professors at the university have started teaching online classes, but still prefer more traditional approaches to educate their students.

Don Redmond, associate professor of mathematics, said he has enjoyed his experience with online classes, but prefers teaching students face-to-face.

Redmond said students do have a few advantages with online courses, but most of them come at the price of sacrificing personal contact.

“With online courses, I never get to see a student in a physical classroom, so my interactions are limited to online classrooms or e-mail,” he said. “When you teach a student in person, you see if they are struggling with an equation, or do not understand a concept. But online, you can not give the same attention to students.”

Redmond also said although students have easy access to homework and lecture notes online, they feel less inclined to complete their work when they are not in a university setting and tend to do their work at the last minute.

“When students take online classes, they need to have the initiative to work on their coursework on their own,” he said. “Professors can not be there in person to work with them and remind them exactly what time an assignment is due.”

Matie Funk, a senior from St. Libory studying nutrition, said she started her first online class this summer and has thoroughly enjoyed her experience.

“It really like my class so far. It is really simple and if I ever have any questions, all I have to do is e-mail my teacher,” she said. “Our instructor sort of has a deadline for us to turn in assignments, but I like the class because I can turn the projects in on my own time.”

Although Redmond does prefer teaching in an actual classroom, he said he understands the importance of online classes in today’s university setting.

“I enjoy teaching in classrooms more, but I think that is because I am still focused on the old-school style of teaching,” he said. “I know students have personal issues that keep them tied to a certain place, so they do not always have the option to attend classes. It is nice to know students have the opportunity to complete classes outside of a university setting.”

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About Us

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JOHANNESBURG — Nelson Mandela’s health has deteriorated and he is now in critical condition, the South African government said Sunday.

The office of President Jacob Zuma said in a statement that he had visited the 94-year-old anti-apartheid leader at a hospital Sunday evening and was informed by the medical team that Mandela’s condition had become critical in the past 24 hours.

“The doctors are doing everything possible to get his condition to improve and are ensuring that Madiba is well-looked after and is comfortable. He is in good hands,” Zuma said in the statement, using Mandela’s clan name.

Zuma also met Graca Machel, Mandela’s wife, at the hospital in Pretoria and discussed the former leader’s condition, according to the statement. Zuma was accompanied on the visit by Cyril Ramaphosa, the deputy president of the country’s ruling party, the African National Congress.

Mandela was jailed for 27 years under white racist rule and released in 1990. He then played a leading role in steering the divided country from the apartheid era to democracy, becoming South Africa’s first black president in all-race elections in 1994. He was hospitalized on June 8 for what the government said was a recurring lung infection.

In Sunday’s statement, Zuma also discussed the government’s acknowledgement a day earlier that an ambulance carrying Mandela to the Pretoria hospital two weeks ago had engine trouble, requiring the former president to be transferred to another ambulance for his journey. Pretoria, South Africa’s capital, lies about 50 km (30 miles) from Johannesburg, where Mandela has been living.

“There were seven doctors in the convoy who were in full control of the situation throughout the period. He had expert medical care,” Zuma said.

“The fully equipped military ICU ambulance had a full complement of specialist medical staff including intensive care specialists and ICU nurses. The doctors also dismissed the media reports that Madiba suffered cardiac arrest. There is no truth at all in that report.”

Mandela, a Nobel Peace Prize laureate, is seen by many around the world as a symbol of reconciliation, and Zuma appealed to South Africans and the international community to pray for the ailing ex-president, his family and the medical team attending to him.

“Mandela is well-looked after and is comfortable. He is in good hands,” Zuma said in the statement, using Mandela’s clan name.

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Blackhawks looking ahead to another Stanley Cup

JAY COHEN  
Associated Press

CHICAGO — The playoff beard never quite came in for Jonathan Toews. Same for Patrick Kane. It’s OK. It looks as if they are going to get plenty of practice in the coming years.

The Chicago Blackhawks will be able to bring back much of their young core of top players next season when they try to become the first repeat Stanley Cup winner since the Detroit Red Wings in 1997 and 1998. Awash in the glow of the franchise’s second title in three years, owner Rocky Wirtz said: “We want to be in position to win every year.”

The Blackhawks edged the Bruins 3-2 in Boston on Monday night to become the first team with two titles since the NHL instituted a salary cap in 2005.

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Chicago Blackhawks owner Rocky Wirtz will bring the Stanley Cup to the Illinois Executive Mansion in Springfield later this summer for free public viewing.

Stanley Cup to make Springfield appearance

The date will be announced later.
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**Crossword**

**ACROSS**
1. Mary — Today is an 8 — I have a plan.
2. Cancer — Today is a 6 — Decrease your personal debts over the coming week. You may have fun without spending much. Make the changes you've been contemplating. A lovely moment develops.
3. Taurus — Today is an 8 — Continue to increase your level of expertise. Take more responsibility. What you're learning contradicts what you thought. Use your secret power.
4. Gemini — Today is a 9 — Begin your balance by doing what you promised. Provide excellent service. You'll be able to take on new stuff later. Review the plan. Shorten your home repair list.
5. Libra — Today is a 7 — Confirm what you've learned with others. Continue to increase your area of influence this week. Make the first move. Choose the jobs you want to do. Document the results.

**DOWN**
1. LEO — Today is an 8 — Be cautious with money now. A bond gets renewed. Delegate and inspire action. Continue to increase your search parameters, and profit.
2. AQUARIUS — Today is a 7 — Take charge. Calm down someone who's getting agitated. You may find your responsibilities rise this week. Love spurs you to action. Leave routine chores for another day.
3. SAGITTARIUS — Today is a 7 — Gather up as much as you can, and beware of hidden expenses. Get rid of unnecessary stuff. Others vie for your attention; your teammates score. Strive for perfection.

**Jumble**
Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

Jumbles:
- AGEMO
- NASEOS
- RADTIF
- LOYHL

**SUDOKU**

**THE Daily Commuter Puzzle**
by Jacqueline E. Mathews

**THE DAILY EGYPTIAN**
Pick up the Daily Egyptian each day to test your crossword skills.
Two university athletes have been lucky enough to continue their baseball careers at the next level; the minor leagues. Former/elder Austin Montgomery and pitcher Bryant George both play for the Southern Illinois Miners, last year’s Frontier League champions.

While at SIU, Montgomery, who will graduate this summer, led the Salukis in most batting statistics this past season. George, a 2010 SIU alumnus, still holds the all-time appearances and saves records for Saluki baseball.

Montgomery, a recent addition to the Miners, signed just two weeks ago after talking to Miners’ manager Mike Pinto. “I tried out the next morning and played that night,” Montgomery said. “The coaches must have liked what they saw.” Montgomery said he has started a few games since joining the Miners, but isn’t a constant starter in the line-up yet.

Pinto, who has been the league’s winningest manager since 2007, said he has a board in his office of college prospects in the area. Montgomery was on this board. He said some players can be removed from the list by how little they produce their senior year or if they get drafted.

This was initially the case for George after he was drafted by the Los Angeles Angels in the 15th round of the 2010 baseball amateur draft. He said he played for two seasons but injured his elbow and was released.

George said he went from throwing 100 mph to 85 mph, which is a big drop for a pitcher in the major leagues. He was picked up by the Miners in March 2013.

George’s tough road with injuries has continued in his professional career. He has been on the disabled list for more than three weeks and medical officials still don’t have a diagnosis for his elbow. Despite injuries and line-up inconsistencies, Montgomery said it’s good to be teammates with George again.

“He’s a little crazy, but all baseball players are a little crazy,” Montgomery said.

Professional baseball is relatively new to southern Illinois as the Miners had their inaugural season in 2007.

Montgomery, a Marion native, and George, a Du Quoin native, both said they attended games in Marion when they were younger and looked up to the players.

George said as a father, he knows he has to be the same kind of role model he used to see on the field.

“To these kids, we are on the same level as the St. Louis Cardinals,” George said.

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