

## Navratri Celebration at Anubhuti Retreat & Meditation Center, Novato

*Live Music, Garba Raas, True Story of Shiv Shakti Goddesses, Devi Darshan  
(a vision of live goddesses) ...*

More than 160 participants gathered on Sunday for the *Navratri* festival celebration at the Brahma Kumaris Retreat Center. This year's *Navratri* celebration coincided with the Brahma Kumaris' global event "Experiencing Inner Power and Protection". The BKs launched the worldwide project "Inner Power and Protection" with the aim to help us face the challenges of the insecure world we live in today. September is the month where BK centers across the world hold programs with the theme "Inner Power and Protection". How do we harness our inner strength? Is Divine protection possible? How do we access this? What effect do such experiences have on our own lives and the lives of those around us? The true story of Shiv Shakti Goddesses and the destruction of vices as symbolized by burning of the effigy of ravan on the final day of Navratri juxtaposed "Inner Power and Protection". Ravan refers to the vices within us, as we reveal the inner strengths within us, we also remove the vices in and around us.

The program started with participants from diverse cultural background dancing together to the live music that accompanied the *garba & dandiya raas*. After about one hour of this energizing dance, Sister Chandru, gave a talk on the spiritual meaning behind the celebration of Navratri.

"One can't fight the changes around them; one can only prepare for them", says Sister Chandru. "This can be done by making our mental, spiritual and physical health an absolute priority," she continues. "For only if this foundation is solid can the building of our lives be secure and provide us with the inner strength to face the many challenges of this century," she explains. Sister Chandru has been a student and teacher of Brahma Kumaris Raja Yoga meditation for forty-five years. She moved to the United States from India back in the 1970's carrying with her a vision to provide a place of peace and solitude for busy folk.

Following the talk, everyone proceeded to the hall where four live goddesses, Laksmi, Durga, Kali, and Saraswati were presented to the audience on the stage. The atmosphere was ritualistic yet spiritual. The four goddesses signifies wealth (Laksmi), wisdom and knowledge (Saraswati), Durga, the demon-fighter, and Kali, the one who pursues and destroy all evils. Prasad and snacks were offered thereafter and of course, the BK tradition of blessing cards were distributed to everyone. Celebrating Navratri at Anubhuti brought new experiences to many as they left the retreat center with the true story of the Shiv Shakti Goddesses.