

ISCOWPSM News



Brahman Ox Team Coming Soon!

Also:

Tractor: An
Implement of
Destruction

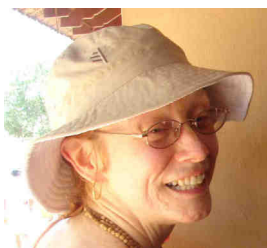
Not an
Unfeeling Object

Radharani
Moves On

Luck of the
Irish Cows

WWW.ISCOWP.ORG





Dear ISCOWP Members,

Gita and Radharani have passed away. We are most sad without their presence, but we are thankful they passed from this world

amongst friends and in a spiritual atmosphere.

In honor of our first ox team, Vraja and Gita, who have now passed away, we are campaigning to acquire a Brahman ox team to love, train, and exemplify the benefits of cow protection.

Two of our articles in this issue have appeared in the Indian "Back To Godhead" magazine. We are proud that we are able to educate their wide audience.

Thank you for the success of the garden campaign. The deer fence is about to be built and seedlings are now growing in the greenhouse! Please read and enjoy this issue!

Yours, Chayadevi

ISCOWP News Contents

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>3 Letters
Experiences while caring for cows.</p> <p>4 ISCOWP Update
Read of the progress of the garden campaign and what's going on at the ISCOWP farm.</p> <p>5 Brahman Cows and Ox Team Coming Soon
Learn how you can help bring Brahman bovines to ISCOWP.</p> <p>6 Tractor, An Implement of Destruction
Modern technology is not always the answer.</p> | <p>8 Luck of the Irish Cows
A cow protector in Ireland joyfully describes her cows.</p> <p>10 Not an Unfeeling Object
While scholars claim cows have consciousness and intelligence, Gita passes away exhibiting both.</p> <p>12 All About You
An ISCOWP member featured each issue.</p> <p>13 Radharani Moves On
Radharani lived a very long beautiful life.</p> |
|--|---|

ISCOWP Profile

The International Society for Cow Protection, Inc. (ISCOWP) was incorporated in the USA, March 1990, as a 501 (c)(3) non-profit, tax-exempt organization. William and Irene Dove (Balabhadra das and Chayadevi dasi) are its managing directors. They are disciples of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, the Founder Acharya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON). Through their spiritual master's teachings, they have imbibed the practices and benefits, both spiritual and material, of lifetime cow protection.

Cow protection means enabling cows to live out their natural lives with love and affection. The tenets of cow protection are universal and nonsectarian, available to all regardless of race, creed, or nationality.

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iscowp.org/Adopt A Cow Today.htm

Editor's note

Articles and quoted comments by those other than the editors do not necessarily represent the viewpoint of the editors. ISCOWP and the lotus/cow symbol are trademarks of the International Society for Cow Protection, Inc.

Letters

Rathi the Ox

From: Jagulana@juno.com

To: iscowp@earthlink.net

Sent: 1/7/2008 4:46:15 PM

Subject: Rathi the Ox

I have been following your wonderful progress for years here in Badger by reading your newsletter received by Advaita Candra Das. Now that he no longer lives here, it is time that I make a donation and begin receiving my own copy.



Rathi

Please find enclosed a photo of my ox Ratha Yatra (affectionately known as Rathi) who left his body on January 31 of 2007, 3 months after your Vraja left you. I believe I saw Vraja at the LA Ratha Yatra in the early 90's. Rathi was 18 years old and I took care of him for almost 14 years, ever since I moved onto my piece of property here at Panorama Farms. Rathi was born here before I arrived; a totally white half Brown Swiss and half Brahma who turned into a massive chocolate beauty that always so impressed anyone who got to see him. Madhuvisa Prabhu owned him and planned to team him with a full

Swiss named Padi Yatra, but it never worked out. After Madhuvisa moved away, several different people came and tried to make the team work, but Rathi had not been worked when young and he was more trouble than it was worth to anyone. Padi was mellow and went off to become famous elsewhere in his own right. When I arrived here, Rathi was pretty much abandoned, being tied out to various trees on the farm; no one knowing what to do with him.

I never trained or worked oxen, but I did take care of 7 of them at the Colorado farm in the early 80's and again when those boys were all transferred to the Bhaktivedanta Village Gurukula in Three Rivers, CA. So I did not hesitate to take Rathi onto my property to help me mow my 5-acre pasture, but mostly just to save him. What a 14 years we had! He was not petable but I was successful in caring for him and he gave me many laughs over the years, and when he died, many tears. I had a rescue horse that came here for 5 years and Rathi loved that old horse. When he died 9 months before Rathi, I witnessed quite amazing symptoms of separation in Rathi that touched my heart.

Despite my painful disappointment at the failure of Prabhupada's great plan for farms all across America, I have remained loyal to ISCKON, although most of the devotees in Badger have taken a different path. So I live alone, my heart more into animals and the land than into people. After spending the last 6 years becoming a horse trainer of colts, I am now working on becoming a "muleman". I congratulate you on your dedication to Prabhupada's vision when so few other devotees were able to take it to heart. It would mean a lot to me if you could print this and put Rathi's picture in your newsletter.

Hari Krishna,
Adi-purusa das

Grassy Ridge Oxen



Santa came into town with the use of my oxen this year. He and I are very close if you know what I mean.

I have been watching your site for over a year now. I found it when I was looking up oxen information. I started my team three years ago. After working horses and then moving to oxen, I will never go back to working horses. I appreciate the information you have on your site and enjoy seeing the updates on your achievements.



Me, Cody, and Sam and Levi who were only a few months old.

I use my team for educational demonstrations at historic events and festivals around Missouri and Kansas, (volunteer work) and spoil them rotten at home. They don't have to work hard but they will when need be. I just wanted to say hello and

thank you for such a nice web site and the availability to the information. I hope to one day I get a website up.

You are more than welcome to use any of my photos in your newsletter, I love to share and encourage any who will listen. My wife Kim and I go to schools, libraries, and historic events all over Missouri and into Kansas. We love to share the joys of working and playing mostly with our oxen. We are involved with the local 4-H equestrian group, and we have been teaching children the joys of working with and showing horses for over 25 years. We live on a small five acre farm north of Oak Grove, MO. We find ourselves busy most all summer long and well into winter sharing our love of animals and agriculture.

Rick Lunceford

grassyridgeoxen@aol.com

Home for Wayward Holsteins



Bhima, is an ISCOWP Holstein ox.

I stumbled upon your website and just wanted to commend you for the good work you are doing! I have three Holsteins that were culled from the dairy I used to milk at, now they are just big spoiled pets! I work 3 jobs to be able to feed them and keep them on a little patch of land in the country. They are good girls, though, and I love them very much. I call my farm "The Home for Wayward Holsteins"! We can't save them all, but we can save some, can't we?! :)

Keep up the good work, you guys!

Best regards, Judy Toomey,

waywardholstein@yahoo.com



ISCOWP Update

Fence line

An old 1/2 mile fence line in the woods is about 50 years old. The previous owners of the property did not properly maintain it. They only patched it in a few places. There are trees dead on the neighbor's side that have been laying there for a long time. The protocol is that the neighbors share the responsibility of maintaining their common fence line. Therefore, Balabhadra asked the neighbor if we could take his fallen trees for fixing the fence line. He agreed.

The trees are very well seasoned (dry) and many so large that we had to split them lengthwise which gave us four posts from each 7 foot section. The posts are some of most beautiful we have ever seen.

Tranakarta das and Chaitanya Bhagavat das started splitting fence posts in mid February. They had never split posts before. Balabhadra taught them how to read the wood grain so when they split the logs the finished posts would be of a nice size.

Each day they split eight posts. They used five metal wedges and a twelve-pound sledgehammer to split each log. The result of their hard work was over 150 fence posts.

We also cleared all the brush away from the old fence line and started carrying and laying the posts in place along the old fence line ten to twelve feet apart. After the posts were laid in place, we hired Yudhisthira and Moses to dig holes and set posts, as they are expert.

We waited to the waning moon to set the posts as historically the moon has its time and place for every activity. Just as in gardening, plants that are grown above the ground are planted during the waxing moon. Similarly, plants that grow below the ground, such as potatoes, tubers, etc. are planted during the waning moon. For best results, fence posts are set in the ground during the waning moon as it helps to hold them in the ground.

As of this writing there is a one fourth mile left of the one half mile fence line to complete. However, the remaining 1/4 mile fence line is not in as much disrepair as the previous 1/4 mile. After the posts are all placed, wire must be strung to complete the fence line.

Cows

The cows have just gone out on pasture. Actually, it was their idea.

Balabhadra was going to wait a few days, but they broke out to eat the short new grasses. As always, at this time of year, the cows are very happy. The long winter of confinement in the barn and eating just hay is over. During that wintertime, we the cowherds, spend several hours a day feeding out hay, and spreading old hay over their manure to make a nice bedding pack for them to lie on in comfort. The manure in this pack decomposes and makes a warm bed as well as great fertilizer for the fields when the barns are cleaned out.

The passing of Gita and Radharani, two of our oldest cows, is covered in detail starting on page twelve. Bhumi had a health crisis but survived. Lakshmi noticed a small growth in the corner of her eye. We called the vet and he diagnosed cancer behind and around her eye. The only way to remove the cancer was to remove the eye also. As many of you remember, Jaya, the ox, had the same medical problem and had to have his eye removed also. Two years later, Jaya is cancer free. The vet told us that cancer of the eye is not uncommon in white-faced cattle.

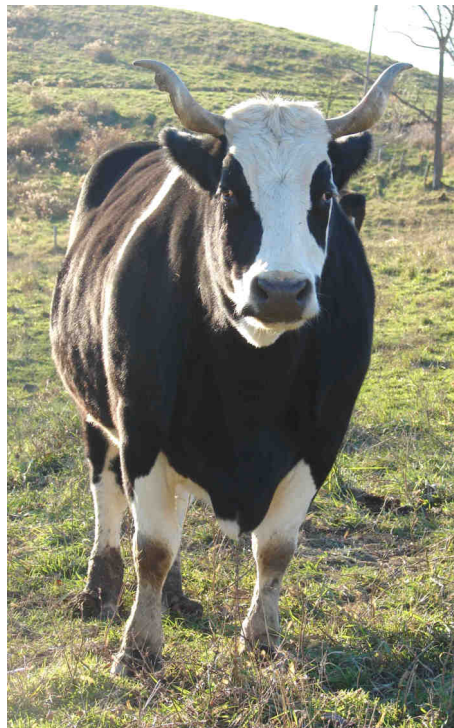
Lakshmi, Chaitanya Bhagavat, and Valerie, the driver, handled taking Bhumi to her operation and supporting her throughout. One really sweet and interesting thing was that every morning Jaya went and checked on Bhumi who was confined in the geriatric barn after her operation. The other cows stopped to see her but no one was as consistent as Jaya. Jaya and Bhumi would touch noses and then just stand together for a while. We feel it was reassuring for Bhumi to see that Jaya's operation was a success.

Reaching College Students

The University of Ohio at Athens invited Balabhadra to lecture at their Global Leadership Center. At three different classes throughout one day, Balabhadra talked about the importance of sustainable agriculture based on cows, oxen, and land. He

showed the ISCOWP slideshow, Holistic Cow Care, Not Just Milk, and he also distributed ISCOWP newsletters and pamphlets.

The Global Leadership Center networks with different groups around the world who are concerned with land based economics. Courses at the center are very popular with the university's students. Part of the curriculum is to visit and participate in foreign cultural activities. Greg Emory, the director of the center, discussed with Balabhadra the



possibility of ISCOWP as a mentor project for the center and student internships at the ISCOWP farm.

Garden Campaign

As reported in the previous newsletter, the greenhouse has been built. Seedlings are now maturing in the greenhouse to be planted in the garden. All the funds needed to build the deer fence around the garden have been collected. All the wire has been bought and the posts have been ordered and will be here this week. Soon the fence will be built. Next newsletter will show the fence being built and the garden growing. The cold weather we are having should soon end and by the next newsletter everything will be flourishing.

We have you, our wonderful members, to thank for providing the funds to build the greenhouse and build the deer fence. Now we hope to move forward with a successful garden unimpeded by the deer.

Page 4 top: Yudhistira and Chaitanya Bhagavat fixing one half mile fence line.

Top: Bhumi had a successful operation to remove cancer in her eye.

Bottom: Balabhadra distributes ISCOWP literature to an Ohio University class.



Coming Soon ~ Brahman Ox Team and Cows!



In honor of our first ox team, Vraja and Gita, passing away, ISCOWP has arranged for a new Brahman ox team to come to the ISCOWP farm. Your help is needed to acquire them and name them!

We have found a breeder of registered Brahman cows whose family has been breeding them for three generations. Bill Fenn handles his cows as if they are members of his family. He is excited to help us find two bull calves equal in size and temperament who would give us a matched pair for our new ox team. Actually, Bill Fenn just notified us that a matched pair, pictured above, was born a few weeks ago and they would be available to be picked up in August.

Bill Fenn also has two female calves that he would also be willing to sell. You can see how beautiful they can become by viewing two of Bill's heifers on the back page of this newsletter. Altogether, that would make four Brahman animals that we could acquire in August.

Why Brahman animals?

According to the Ayurvedas, which is the section of the Vedas concerning medicine, there is a nerve in the hump on the back of Brahman cows that draws energy from the sun into the cow's body and converts it to potent urine and dung full of medicinal qualities. We would like to make medicines from these cows' dung and urine to help support cow protection and show another way that the cow is

useful other than for supplying milk. This would be a first in North America although a widespread practice in India.

There are other characteristics of Brahman cows that make them a good choice for us as explained at:

<http://www.brahman.org/brahmaninformation.html>

"A factor which contributes to the Brahman's unique ability to withstand temperature extremes is a short, thick, glossy hair coat which reflects much of the sun's rays, allowing them to graze in midday sun without suffering. In severe winters, Brahmans grow a protective covering of long, coarse hair beneath which a dense, downy, fur-like undercoat can be found. An abundance of loose skin,

characteristic of the breed, also aids in its ability to withstand warm weather by increasing the body surface area exposed to cooling. In cold weather the skin is contracted, increasing the thickness of the hide and density of the hair, which aids in retaining body heat. A special feature of the Brahman breed is their ability over other breeds to sweat freely, which contributes greatly to their heat tolerance.

Brahmans are recognized for intelligence and desired disposition. They are very responsive to kindness and are quite gentle when handled properly."

These characteristics are especially good for an ox team. Often Vraja and Gita, Brown Swiss, would find the summers too hot to work during most of the day. Their breathing would become labored quickly. Therefore, Balabhadra could only work them at the coolest parts of the day. Even then, the summer heat was often too much.

Here is a letter from Bill Fenn who is located near Houston, Texas, 2,800 miles round trip from ISCOWP.

I too enjoyed visiting with you last night. Thanks for the great photos! I didn't tell you that I am kind of particular about who I sell my cattle too because I need to know that they will be going to a good home. Everyone who has my cattle loves them. We could tell right off that they would be in good hands with you. Now have no doubts that yours is the best home (away from my home) that they could hope for. You don't know how happy I would be to see a pair of my guys working together with you. I am glad to know you and will stay in touch. I am always excited about new babies, but I'm hoping for a special pair for you.

We are excited about the rejuvenation of the herd and we hope you are too. Our barns and land can comfortably support 26 animals, which is the number we have usually had throughout the years. At present, we have nineteen, because many of them have passed away due to their aging bodies. Most of the herd is 12 to

15 years old. In the next five to seven years, many of them will have passed on. Therefore, it is time to seriously plan for the herd's future.

We started our herd with Vraja and Gita, who were saved from the slaughterhouse, and mostly ISKCON New Vrindavan's cows, because at that time their cow protection program was overcrowded. The



ISCOWP's next ox team.

arrangement was that New Vrindavan would provide for feed and medical expenses, and we would provide the personal care. In the last two years, we have not received payment for medical expenses.

At this point, New Vrindavan's herd is not overcrowded and we feel a strong desire to show a more self-sufficient working program of cow protection. Therefore, the acquisition of animals that can help us achieve that goal. We will still take in rescue animals as we have the ability.

With this acquisition of Brahman animals, we will have the ability to make potent medicines and have a working team for the farm who can also once again travel and exemplify the benefits of cow protection. Whatever you can give towards this rejuvenation will be greatly appreciated.

Each of the four donors with the largest donation will get to name one of the four animals, and we will all get to watch them grow and enjoy their pastimes as protected cows.

In our first announcement to our monthly donors about the expense of acquiring the animals, the rental of a truck to transport the animals to our farm was included. In the meantime, we have bought a second-hand truck and are paying for it with monthly payments. It is in excellent condition and will do the job of transporting the animals from Texas and in the future taking the ox team to events to show the benefits of cow protection. We bought the truck for \$5,400 with \$190 as monthly payments.

Here is what it would take to acquire the new animals. You, our donors, have already paid for preliminary trip to breeder. Due to fluctuating gas prices, we are presenting a sliding scale for travel. It will take two people to bring them to the ISCOWP farm.

New Brahman Animals

Two bull calves	\$2,000.00
Two heifers	2,000.00
Medical clearance	400.00
Gas for truck	560.00 - 700.00
Food for trip	120.00
Sub-total	5,220.00

It would be great to pay off the truck
5,400.00

TOTAL \$10,400.00

Please use the enclosed envelope and form to help bring Brahman cows to ISCOWP! Thank you!

Tractor ~ An Implement of Destruction



When, we traveled throughout the USA with a team of oxen to show people the usefulness of the oxen as part of our educational presentation for cow protection. We often accompanied the Festival of India to various major cities, led the Rathayatra parade with our team, and after the parade corralled the oxen in the local park with cow protection literature to distribute. Thousands of people viewed the oxen and asked many questions. To explain our position, Balabhadra das would give a description

of the petrol-powered tractor as a means of showing the worth of the oxen.

Although this description was given in USA cities, utilizing the tractor over the ox will meet with the same environmental problems and difficulties for farmers worldwide, specifically in India where reports of farmers committing suicide are alarming.

Making of a Tractor

Many ecologically conscious people seem to take tractor-powered

farming for granted. The first question we ask these people is, "How many mining operations do you need to make a tractor"?

You need mines for iron, coal, limestone, manganese, nickel, copper, bauxite, tin, and zinc, just to name a few. For these minerals, you have to rape Mother Earth and create hellish conditions for thousands of workers. And, that's just step one.

Next, there is the smelting plants, where the ores are broken loose and

cooked down. Now we are talking about big industry, huge factories, more hellish work. And, we're getting into large-scale pollution.

From the smelting plants we go to the factory where the tractor is put together. Still more hellish working conditions, still more pollution.

Now the tractor is finally assembled and sitting in the parking lot without tires. Where do we get the



Art by Janardhan Sakar

materials for the tires? People used to go to tropical countries and pay workers a few cents to cut rubber trees and bleed them for latex. These days we have steel-belted radials, made from synthetics derived from petroleum.

Speaking of petroleum, now that we have our tractor sitting on its tires in the parking lot, what does it run on? You cannot put grass and oats in that tank. You need petroleum, which you might have to fight for since petroleum is not a renewable resource. To prove it is yours, you may have to send troops to the Middle East to kill men, women, and children. You might have to sacrifice your son or even your daughter. If you win, when the man with the Exxon Valdez oil tanker ships your oil across the ocean he spills half of it into the sea.

Whatever oil you cannot currently use goes to the refinery. If you have ever driven through a refinery town, you know the air smells foul, and the water is so bad that it is often declared hazardous to drink.

Now, our farmer has his tractor, his steel-belted radials, and his petrol. He fires up the engine and thinks. "With this tractor I can do the work of fifty oxen." He looks at his oxen and says, "I don't need you any more. I have my tractor. I have my petroleum. You can go to the slaughterhouse."

When you start killing bulls, you are destined to receive very negative karmic reactions. Some of the karmic reaction begins right away. For a start, now you have hapless people working in slaughterhouses. These slaughterhouse jobs are amongst the most dangerous and demoralizing in the job market.

The craze to possess a tractor, usually of higher horsepower than they needed, drove many farmers to take heavy loans — only to be saddled later with high maintenance costs, according to an editorial in the Economic and Political Weekly of October 25, 2003." Down to Earth, Tractor Crazy, Vol 13, No 11 October 31, 2004

Then he looks at his teamsters who used to work those oxen, people who worked in the mode of goodness in the fields, growing grains, and vegetables. He says, "I've already killed my oxen. I have my tractor, I have no work for you. You are unemployed. Why don't you go to the city and work in the factory to make

"Occupation with highest employee rate of injury in the USA: slaughterhouse worker."

Diet for a New America, John Robbins

"Occupation with highest employee turnover rate in USA: slaughterhouse worker. Occupation with highest employee rate of injury in the USA.: slaughterhouse worker. " Diet for a New America, John Robbins

But the farmer doesn't think about that. He thinks, "I don't have to feed those oxen anymore. That profit goes into my pocket." At the cost of their lives.

The farmer is also forgetting the cost of acquiring the tractor. He has lost the cost of feeding his oxen and acquired the larger cost of paying off interest loans to pay for his tractor. These loans often come with high interest rates. On the economic market, a tractor is worth more than an ox. Selling his oxen to the slaughterhouse did not pay for his tractor.

"Several small farmers in Punjab have committed suicide because of inability to repay loans taken to buy tractors, says a study conducted at Punjab Agricultural University (PAU) in Ludhiana last year.

more machines, or beg in the street? If he does not employ anyone and does the ox work himself he is thinking," Now my life will be easier, I will not have to work so hard."

Then he takes the tractor out to plow his field. Its heavy tires compact the earth, so the roots of his hybrid plants have trouble growing. He no longer has manure to nourish the soil, so he pours on commercial fertilizer, made with huge inputs of natural gas. Because the crops eventually deplete the organic substances in the soil that hold the moisture, his soil easily washes away into the stream. The weak soil that is left grows weak plants easy prey for weeds, bugs, and disease. So, the farmer brings out his arsenal of pesticides. These also wash downstream. To acquire the pesticides, the farmer takes out another high interest loan. Now he is in debt for the tractor and the pesticides.

Seeds of Suicide, a 2005 documentary film by Frontline/ World correspondent Chad Heeter

who is a student at U.C. Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism, was filmed in Andhra Pradesh. The film stated; "Last summer an average of seven farmers killed themselves every day. In this part of the world, machinery, chemical fertilizers and pesticides, and hybrid seeds -- all of which originated in the West -- often spell disaster rather than prosperity. In India since 1997, more than 25,000 farmers have committed suicide, many drinking the chemical that was supposed to make their crops more, not less, productive."

Natures Factory

So, what is the alternative? When a cow gives birth, about half the time the calf is a bull. These bulls are God's tractors, produced in the "factory" of the mother's womb. This factory does not pollute or create hellish working conditions. And, it operates by the laws of nature, which God has arranged. With this tractor there is no pollution because it can grow its own fuel-oats and grasses and even the wastes are useful. Cow manure can be processed to yield methane, a clean burning fuel. The residue can go into the ground as a first class fertilizer and soil-builder. Now there is no need for by-products from the slaughterhouse to build organic content, nor pesticides.

With this tractor, there is no violence. The relationship between the farmer and the oxen is based on love and trust. The farmer works side by side with the oxen and when the oxen see the farmer, they expect to be petted, and stroked under the neck. In return, they like to work, and they work well with an experienced farmer.

"The bull is the emblem of the moral principle, and the cow is the representative of the earth. When the bull and the cow are in a joyful mood, it is to be understood that the people of the world are also in a joyful mood. The reason is that the bull helps production of grains in the agricultural field, and the cow delivers milk, the miracle of aggregate food values." Srimad Bhagavatam 1.16.18 Purport by Srila Prabhupada



Lila is the one who talks the most and listens the most. Lila was three months old when she came here. She is Rukmini's daughter. She is a gentle natured cow.

Luck of the Irish Cows

By Jan Alexander

Nine years ago, when we bought this 26 acre farm, we talked long and hard about getting some cattle. We both really liked the idea of giving protection to some cows. We knew they would create an enormous amount of work, - and we were right. The responsibility of keeping cows is sometimes quite daunting.

How we came to get these ones, and all the stories they have created since then, would be book length, but we hope these photographs and descriptions of our cattle will give you some idea about these wonderful animals and how they live here on this farm in the north-west of Ireland.

Udhava must surely be the softest hearted animal in Ireland. He's a big



Here is Udhava (behind) and Pradyumna (with horns). They were both born here on our farm in May and August 2000 respectively. Although they are now huge, I still think of them as "the two little ones".



Jan brushing Aruni

gentle giant. He has absolutely no fear and always thinks good of everyone who comes his way. He just loves all the attention he can get and has a particular weakness for food! Any kind of food. Everyone who meets him loves him. From the time he was born he looked astonishingly beautiful, and even now, at seven years old, he still does. When the cattle are in for the winter, I use a step ladder to brush his back. He's a big guy.

Aruni is now eight years old. She came to this farm with her mother when she was five months old. A neighbor/farmer described her as "a runt" and advised us to 'get rid of her'. Sure enough she began walking awkwardly about three years ago, and began lying down a lot. She looked sickly and was losing weight. The local vet gave us a tonic to give her and he advised that if that didn't work we should 'bring her to the factory'. We found a homeopathic vet, and after a few different remedies that had no effect, we eventually hit on the right remedy for Aruni. It is Plumbum Met 200c. Aruni will never be a normal looking cow. She is a bit hunched and is very stiff in the legs when she first gets up. But she is happy and she is a real character. Whenever she gets low, - usually in wet, cold conditions before she comes in at the beginning of winter, we just give her one of the Plumbum Met 200c and she is away again.

Rukmini is now nineteen years old. She is the mother of all mothers. The original one. When Udhava's mother left her body when he was four months old, even though she was feeding her little one month old calf (Pradyumna), she suckled the big greedy orphan also. She is the leader of the heard, - the wise matriarch. She reads the weather long before the meteorology department and has wisely led and directed our small herd for the eight years that they have

been with us. She is the master communicator with us, and always makes it very clear what she wants. (And being such an expert charmer, - usually gets what she wants). Throughout the years she has kept herself healthy, never over indulging and always going after the herbs she needs for a healthy coat and good health. Now at nineteen years old she suffers from a bit of arthritis, and her dear old soft eyes are circled by white hairs now. We'll be looking for a homeopathic remedy to start her on for the arthritis now that they are all in for the winter. As she gets older, she has become quite clingy and follows me around wanting to be brushed, fed carrots/apples and other treats, and generally she just likes to be near us human care givers. But she is still the leader. Whenever I sneak her out of their winter shed and yard for a little green grass under the young forest plantation, the others become so upset and watch her intently until she is brought back in.

Pradyumna took a keen interest in everything from the time he was born. He never misses anything. As he grew he began to take on big Udhava and entice him into wrestling matches. For big soft Udhava it was always just a game, but for Pradyumna it was training. He wanted to be boss from an early age. Eventually he beat Udhava, even though he was much smaller than him. So the next step was the other of the three bullocks, - Arjuna. Arjuna



Here in this photo Arjuna is licking Pradyumna's face and eyes.

always won. He is just too strong for Pradyumna. But now, when they both seem to be of about the same strength (Arjuna is ten and Pradyumna is seven), Pradyumna doesn't take Arjuna on any more. The two bullocks seem to be very close now. Pradyumna seems to really look up to Arjuna now, and he likes to graze beside him and just generally hang out with him.



Not an Unfeeling Object

Gita leading the herd last summer

Gita, one of our oxen, passed away early today on Lord Nityananda's Appearance day, February 18, 2008. Last night strong winds were carrying warm air while they moved billowy clouds swiftly across the sky. As I walked to and from the barns, it felt like someone was turning on and off a floodlight until I realized it was the clouds passing over the white bright moon. The stars were bright. There was a presence in the night: the wind personified to bring Gita away as he thrust his head into the air and opened his mouth.

At first I said, "Don't do that Gita! Don't stress yourself!" Then I would put his head down. After a couple of hours of Caitanya Bhagavata and I

trying to make him comfortable, we came to realize he was trying to leave his body. He was opening his mouth so his soul could leave upward. We had given him Ganga water, placed the CD player of Srila Prabhupada chanting next to him, and on his head we placed Govardhan Sila. Govardhana Sila then sat on His altar on the wall facing Gita.

There are those who say there is no soul or consciousness in an ox such as Gita. Have they spent any time with such an animal while he lived and while he died? If they did, they would realize that not only does the ox understand friendship, basic commands, fear, and happiness, but he also understands when it is time to leave his material body.

Gita had arthritis for several years and each year it became more and more difficult for him to walk. This winter we put him in the geriatric barn so it would be easier for him to access his food and move around. Gita was one of our oldest oxen. He turned 18 years old recently. His twin brother, Vraja, died last summer. He also had arthritis. Together they plowed our fields, led many Rathayatra parades in the United States, and appeared at many events. They greeted guests with their handsome appearance and endearing personalities. In this way, they presented cow protection to the public.

Around February 9, Gita was not able to get up. He did not have the power in his back legs to push up his

large body. Since he was an old ox, we expected that he would leave his body in the near future. We kept him as comfortable as possible and fed him as much as he wanted to eat and drink. In preparation for parting, he daily listened to Srila Prabhupāda's sacred chanting and received holy Ganga water.

Although, it is the exception for an ox to do so much service to Lord Jagannatha and to listen to the chanting of the holy names, it is common for an ox to have given most of his life in service to humanity. However, humans have not given sufficient recognition to the cognitive powers possessed by an ox to do that service.

"Remarkable cognitive abilities and cultural innovations have been revealed," Christine Nicol, professor of animal welfare at Britain's Bristol University, says. *"Our challenge is to teach others that every farm animal is a complex individual, and to adjust our farming culture accordingly."*

Professor Donald Broom, from Cambridge University, studies the behavior of cows and states how cows can become excited by solving intellectual challenges. His team put them in a special pen which had a lever that, when pressed, would release the cows into a field with lots of delicious food rewards. An electroencephalograph was used to measure their brainwaves.

The researchers found that when the cows worked out how to press the lever to reach the food, they showed signs of *delight*. *"The brainwaves showed their excitement; their heartbeat went up and some even jumped into the air. We called it their Eureka moment,"* Professor Broom told the BBC. He continued: *"We need to have a certain amount of respect for these animals, and I think most people have more respect for an animal if they feel it's aware of what's going on."*

Since Gita could not get up by himself, we helped move him twice, each time he surprised us all and walked throughout the barn greeting

the other cows. But once he sat down, he could not get up again. On February 17, after Chaitanya Bhagavata fed him his grains, Gita collapsed. From that point, he struggled to get upright. When he couldn't, Chaitanya and I realized that we needed to flip him to get him into a better position but the two of us would not be strong enough to move his 900 kilo 7 foot tall body. Chaitanya went to the temple to see what help he could get and forty-five minutes

struggling again to get upright. However, this time he was near one of the barn poles and flipping him would not be possible. It was six o'clock and it would be dark at 6:30. As he struggled to get up I tried to brace his back with square bales but he was too heavy and moved them away when he would fall back. I knew Chaitanya was coming to check on Gita, and I tried to comfort Gita by chanting softly the Hare Krishna mantra into his ear until Chaitanya came.



later came back with six devotees to help flip Gita. We had four devotees on Gita's legs and three at his head to make sure his head moved with his body. We expertly flipped Gita and he landed sitting up. We braced him with square bales of hay and then he tried to eat the bales. Enthusiastically, all the devotees ran to him with hay to eat. The cows ran to the gate to see. Everyone was very happy at what appeared to be a miraculous recovery. Joy permeated the atmosphere. I was inspired and moved to see the selfless service of the devotees and their joy at Gita's recovery.

When I checked on Gita later in the day, he was lying down obviously

"They are not unfeeling objects," said Professor Marc Bekoff of the University of Colorado, US. He, Professor Donald Brown, Professor Christine Nicole, and others from around the globe spoke at the Compassion in World Farming Trust (CIWF Trust) conference in London in 2005.

The Bristol University researchers documented and reported at the conference how cows within a herd form friendship groups of between two and four animals with whom they spend most of their time, often grooming and licking each other. They will also dislike other cows, and can bear grudges for months or years.

"Talk of animal sentience is often brushed off as fluffy and sentimental – not the stuff of science of the real world. But

perhaps we have been too hasty in our dismissal – perhaps consciousness does *not peer through our eyes alone.*”
 Julianna Kettlewell, BBC news science reporter at conference.

When Caitanya came, we spent a couple of hours trying to make Gita comfortable and softly speaking to him caring and loving words that calmed him. The winds were very strong and loud and then there was a sudden change in Gita. He started putting his head in the air and opening his mouth. He no longer reacted to our words. We felt he was in the process of leaving this material world and in another realm. By then it was late evening. A few hours away and it would be Lord Nityananda’s Appearance day.

We had always called Gita the Brahmana of the twins. He was always the gentleman, sensitive to the feelings of others. Listening to Srila Prabhupada chanting, tasting Ganga water, with Govardhan Sila in his sight, on Lord Nityananda’s Appearance day, Gita left his body.

The humble sage, by virtue of true knowledge, sees with equal vision a learned and gentle Brahman, a cow, an elephant, a dog, and a dog eater (outcaste). Bhagavad-gita. Chpt. 5 Text 18



References:

1. The Secret Lives of Cows , Jonathan Leake, news.com.au 3-5-5
2. Farm Animals Need Emotional TLC, BBC News Online 4/05



Radharani Moves On

12/5/07

In December of last year, Radharani was having difficulty keeping up with the herd. At that point, we put her in the geriatric barn so she could easily get her food and water. Just yesterday Lakshmi found her on her side unable to get up. We managed to get her to sit up and she was doing fine. Then this morning Lakshmi again found Radharani down on her side unable to get up. She was shivering (it has been very cold here in the 20s and 30s). Lakshmi managed with help of two other devotees to get Radharani up and they covered her with blankets. Later in the day she was found down again. She was then braced by putting hay bales by her side to support her.

12/8/07

The vet came and said Radharani had a stroke. He feels that at her age (23 years old in human years and 115 old

in cow years) this may be just too much for her. Either she will have another stroke or she will get better and get up. He gave us some medicine to give her, but it does not seem like she is getting stronger. A tape of Srila Prabhupada chanting is playing continuously.

12/14/07

Radharani left early this evening. Lakshmi checked on her about 7:00 PM and found she had passed away. She left surrounded by her friends. During her entire illness Gita would always sit down right in front of her in her line of sight. He was a calming influence on her. He was like a meditating sage giving comfort to an old friend during their illness. Asha and Shyama were also very good to Radharani. They would sit next to her or very close by every day. They all loved her as she was a sweet and gentle cow.

All About You!



Vrajavadhu is our featured member this issue. The following is a letter written by Vrajavadhu and then a letter written by her personal servant about her history.

"When I met Srila Prabhupada I began a new life. Up to that time, my life was full of miseries. I must say, it is still full of miseries, but the difference is he has given me hope. By his books and the Vedic Culture, I know that in the future I will have a better life in Krsna Consciousness. This time I have given him only 1/3 of my life. I want to give Prabhupada more lives, all my lives to come in Gratitude for Srila Prabhupada. I would love to be born in a family of devotees to have a good start on the right path from the very beginning.

When I was out in the world, due to bad karma, I was mistreated by so many people, so my love was directed to love of animals. Because of the teachings of Krsna and Srila Prabhupada, I have learned a higher love, love of cows. As we have learned in one important prayer, the cow is more important to Krishna than even the Brahmanas. So we must take the best care of our cows. They should not be put in distress of any kind. They should have a proper place to rest and not stand on their spindly legs. They should be free of anxiety of any kind. The cows should look on men as their protector and friend. How should we solve the problem of so many little ones and no space to grow? We must be very careful whom we get to care for

the cows. They must be very loving and kind, people who will worship and love the cows.

If there is one thing I have learned it is that if someone steps forward to care for Krishna's beloved cows, Srila Prabhupada and Krishna will be pleased."

Please don't forget the care of our mother, the cow.

Your Servant, Vrajavadhu Devi Dasi

"Vrajavadhu was initiated in Mexico City the first Sunday of December in 1973. She received her name Vrajavadhu, which means Gopis of Vrindavan, from Srila Prabhupada through a letter. She served in Mexico City until 1975 and then moved to Los Angeles to serve Rukmini Dwarkadisha. She came to San Diego in 1978 and has been serving Radha Giridhari for 30 years.

Vrajavadhu's main service has been sponsoring festivals, book distribution, distributing leftover prasadam (food offered to Lord Krishna) to millions of birds throughout Mission Bay and Pacific Beach, sweeping Radha-Giridhari's courtyard and helping to keep Krishna's grounds neat and tidy. Her most beloved service which she holds near and dear is her care for Krishna's cows through ISCOWP.

At 94 she is still maintaining her service, but has to limit her trips to the bay and beach to feed the birds due to falling and breaking her hip three years ago and breaking her collar bone 16 months ago. I take her to distribute the extra prasadam when I can.

Vrajavadhu is an exceptional devotee as she follows all of Srila Prabhupada's instructions and never engages in any sense gratification. She uses every penny that Krishna

Vrajavadhu donated funds to save Vraja from the slaughterhouse and in 1992 visited both Vraja and Gita.

has given her in his service. Her motto is, "Never waste anything and use everything to serve Krishna." She is not afraid to chastise anyone who she sees wasting Krishna's property.

What inspires me most about Vrajavadhu is her determination to chant all her rounds (16 rounds of chanting the Hare Krishna mantra on 108 beads) first thing in the morning, that is her priority, and she has been doing this non stop for 35 years. I am so honored to be her personal servant and witness her sterling character and deep love for Srila Prabhupada and his instructions.

All glories to our sweet cowherd girl, Mother Vrajavadhu."

Your Servant, Ladali d.d.

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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Name the
new cows!

A Brahman ox
team and two
cows are coming
to ISCOWP. Find
how you can help
on page six.

Thank you!

