

News

Holi celebration adds color to Young Commons

Mary Kate Brogan
Senior Reporter

Bare feet slide around in the grass and across the tarp. Faces brighten as mists of red, orange, green and pink explode in the air. Mouths fill with laughter and joy. This is Holi.

Holi, a Hindu festival that celebrates the coming of spring, originated in India, but Elon University students reveled in the celebration on Young Commons. Sophomore Priyanka Sundaram, a marketing major and one of the students who helped plan the event, said she was happy to be sharing a part of her culture with Elon.

"Me and Raj (Rawal) have played Holi since we were little at different universities, and to bring it to Elon was a really great part of our experience here so I think that's why we wanted to do it here, just to show a little bit about our culture to Elon," Sundaram said.

Several students rejoiced in the cultural experience, including senior engineering major Aaron Summers, who said he thinks people can have an educational experience while having fun.

"I've heard of Holi, and I've seen it on the History Channel, and it's just always kind of interested me," Summers said. "It's like the Indian version of Dayglo, I guess you could say, so I just thought I'd come out and see what it was all about and get colored."

The Truitt Center and the students who planned the event worked together with sponsors, Periclean Scholars and the Better Together learning community, to create the event, and Taaza Bistro in Burlington provided free food.

The Holi festival is associated with the



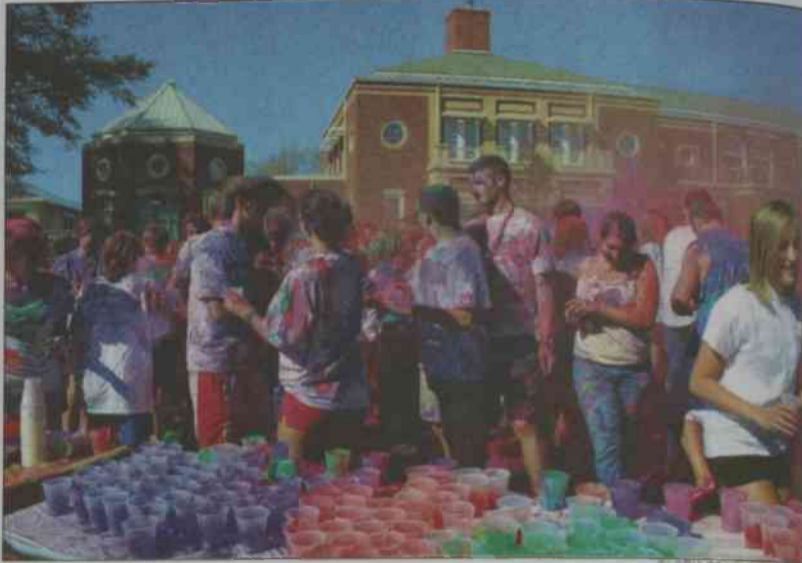
Ruth Sturm speckled in colored powder at Holi.

Lord Krishna, who created fun and frolic in his childhood and youth wherever he went, which Jan Fuller, university chaplain explained, is the purpose of Holi — to celebrate with fun and frolic. Fuller also said she recognizes the event as a way to honor and welcome the traditions of Elon's Indian and Hindu students.

"It's important because we really need to appreciate other cultures and celebrate them and join in them," Fuller said. "This is an opportunity to do that in a way that's not threatening. There's no set of beliefs to affirm except we're tired of winter and we want spring to come."

Sophomore Mason Sklut, Better Together co-president, said the organization chose to sponsor the event so that Elon's students could learn more about Holi and the Hindu religion and its traditions.

"We represent both non-religious and religious traditions in Better Together, and we want students to see similarities they have," Sklut said. "And so we figured



Elon celebrated Holi, the Hindu festival of colors. The festival, which marks the end of winter and the start of spring, is traditionally celebrated with the throwing of colored powder, music and food.

if we participate in this, this would get students to see maybe a similarity that is in Christianity or Judaism or Islam."

Sophomore Becky Hackney, a Periclean Scholar, said she was happy the organization was able to help share her Indian culture with the rest of the students at Elon.

"(Periclean Scholars') focus as the Class of 2012 is to promote cultural awareness on Elon's campus of Indian traditions and things like that. Not only are we trying to partner with sponsors in India and organizations in India, but we're also trying to promote awareness here on Elon's campus," Hackney said. "So this is just a great way to tell people,

'Hey, India's a really cool place. They do really cool things like throw huge tie dye parties.' To be able to share that with others is really special."

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