



Echoes of North America

Shri Ram Chandra Mission

Issue 2

December 2008

Master's news

Master in Dubai and Bangalore

Compiled by Kim Hansen

Dubai, October 22-31, 2008

During Master's visit to Dubai in October, he talked informally with abhyasis on many occasions at the dining table, in the living room and the garden. It was a great delight

He said the idea of knowing God is always individual, it cannot be communal. As a group we can pray; as individuals, we can seek and do what is necessary.

to be near him and to bask in his presence. Following are some extracts from informal conversations.

- An abhyasi handed Master a small envelope with a card inside. The card was stuck in the envelope. As he tried to get it out of the envelope, Master compared it to the human heart, saying, "They give it to you to open but you cannot open it."
- After being presented with a box of sweets by an abhyasi. He looked over at a sister and wanted to give her Prasad; she said she had already received. Master then told a story about telling the truth, about an old man who made his living from cutting firewood. One day while having his picnic lunch, the man's axe fell into the pond and he was desolate. An angel helped him out by diving into the pond and retrieving a series of axes, the first made of diamond, another of gold and finally one of silver; each time the man told him it was not his axe. When the angel dove in one last time and came out with his real axe, he was rewarded for telling

the truth; the angel gave him all of the axes. Ten years later the man was picnicking by the same pond with his wife, and she fell in. Again he was desolate at the loss of his life-long companion. The angel appeared again to help, dove into the pond, and came up with a famous actress. The man claimed her as his wife, which angered the angel who knew the truth and challenged the man. The man explained that he didn't want a repeat of the previous situation, when the angel rewarded his truth-telling by giving him all of the axes retrieved from the pond! Master concluded the story by cautioning



us that one has to be careful even when telling the truth.

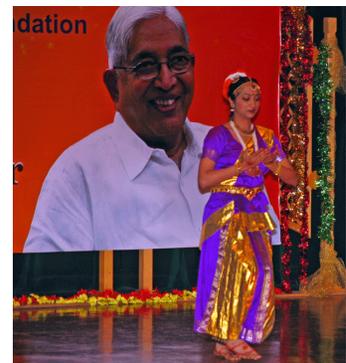
- Master said you can know a people by the god they worship, but you cannot know God by the people who worship Him. He said the idea of knowing God is always individual, it cannot be communal. As a group we can pray; as individuals, we can seek and do what is necessary.
- An abhyasi told Master she feels a strong pull to be more collective and to be around more abhyasis more of the time. Master referred to the game of "tug of war" and said that combined effort of more people yields greater achievement;

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if we are all thinking of the same thing, we can realize it better than any individual. He emphasized that the achievement is always individual, comparing it to feeding a million people individually, though they come as a group.

- An abhyasi asked Master how to attract local "Londoners" to Sahaj Marg. Master said, "Don't treat them as Londoners. Treat them as human beings. We create barriers by thinking."





- Master referred to a common tendency to look at work as belonging to different categories, for example, simple work, difficult work, useless work, valuable work and so on. He said that “work is work” and there is no second category, and anything that has to be done must be done.
- About food, Master said we should eat without expectation and comparison. But we compare everything and so we suffer.
- Master said we create impressions because we allow our minds to be absorbed in what is happening around us. In spirituality, the soul absorbs. He said that dreams containing instruction from the guru are absorbed by the soul, though we don’t remember. The highest form of instruction is in sleep because there is no resistance, the consciousness is not awake.
- Master said that the difference between wanting (desire) and doing (will) is a fundamental fact of life. He said that initially our desire is always active and we have not exercised and trained the will, which we must do. He reminded us that every time we use the will it becomes stronger, and every time we do not use the will it becomes weaker. There is no static will.
- Master sang a line from the movie *The Sound of Music*, “Somewhere in my youth or childhood, I must have done something good.” He said instead of the word “good” we should substitute the words “something which caused this.”

Master encouraged us to realize that prejudices, like personal likes and dislikes, make us more miserable than anything else; and we should give them up.



Stained Glass Param Dham Emblem

Bangalore, October 31 - November 12, 2008

Master flew from Dubai to Bangalore on 31 October. On 2 November he inaugurated the beautiful new Param Dham ashram in south Bangalore and welcomed all assembled to this “wonderful place.” He referred to the Gita and Lord Krishna’s definition of *Param Dham* as the place which you reach and from which you don’t return, literally the Divine Abode. He expressed hope that the ashram would fulfill its purpose of taking us up in our spiritual evolution to the Highest. He specified that spiritual places should provide for elderly people, and therefore an elevator has been installed and the beautifully designed staircase is comfortable for older people; medical attendants will be on call and security provided. He insisted upon the need for inner and

outer cleanliness, referring to Babuji’s requirement that for a spiritual person the inside and the outside must both be clean. He said the physical ambience must be so clean that mosquitoes and flies stay away. Master referred to the size of the ashram, and anticipated it becoming too small. He talked about organic growth as natural, not haphazard, and said that in the West there is an idea that unless everything is planned at the beginning, it is poor planning. He said that adding facilities as we go along produces a beauty of its own which cannot be achieved with advance planning.

Master told a brother informally that the world takes care of itself. He said for each individual, if the heart is okay, the world is okay and will always be safe. He said this world is a “strictly personal” world and the word “global” does not exist in spirituality. He said for each one of us my heart reflects my world, my heart builds my world, and my heart supports the world. He specified that our individual wellbeing and safety does not depend on the American economy or who would be the next president. He said we build our future and our universe with our heart. He concluded by asking us to believe this and encouraging us to exercise our right to do it and enjoy the result.

During his stay in and around Bangalore Master visited several places, including two housewarmings, an outing to a cinema, and a day and overnight stay at CREST, before returning to Manapakam by road on 12 November. Abhyasis awaiting his arrival at Babuji Memorial Ashram were very happy to welcome Master back after more than a month away.



Param Dham ashram, Bangalore, India



Happenings in North America

Charlotte, North Carolina Regional Gathering by Manohar Adusumilli

The Charlotte (North Carolina) Center hosted a regional gathering on September 13th and 14th with attendance by 62 abhyasis and 20 kids from the Carolinas and nearby states. The theme of the gathering was "Master's Role in our Lives."

The gathering started on Saturday with a 10 a.m. satsangh followed by talks related to the theme. A number of questions were prepared to reflect upon our relationship with the Master. Several abhyasis shared their views after the introspection. It was fascinating to hear several abhyasis sharing their solutions to the questions with the rest of the group. A common message was that we should be aware of our surroundings just as Master is. Such awareness teaches us in many ways.



After lunch we had a fun game that got abhyasis mingling and getting to know each other. Next, abhyasis formed into groups to go through the selected readings and discuss them among themselves. The discussions focused on the need to be with Master and the avenues available for us. The points were made that being physically close to Master is wonderful but it is not possible for everyone. Therefore, it is vital for every abhyasi to have a personal internal relationship with the Master. This type of relationship enables us to be with him all of the time.

During the afternoon a child of an abhyasi, Elijah (5th Grade), performed a magic show. His performance delighted kids and adults alike. The show was followed by a small play and songs sung by the kids. We had evening satsangh at 5 p.m. After dinner there was a short video presentation.



On Sunday we had satsangh at 9 a.m. followed by a reading. Next we had a crossword puzzle with questions from the Sahaj Marg Yatra game. A few abhyasis shared their experiences related to the theme and then we had lunch. Everyone left with feelings of contentment and happiness. We appreciated everyone's active participation.

Shreveport, Louisiana Gathering at Lake D'Arbonne State Park by Erin Holston Singh

On October 3rd, 4th and 5th, the Shreveport Center hosted a small gathering at a nearby state park. Around 30 enthusiastic abhyasis came from Arkansas, southern Louisiana and Eastern Texas to spend a weekend with the theme, "Live Simply and in Tune with Nature." We chose the theme to allow ourselves to expand in the natural environment, reflecting on Babjui's maxim.

The Group Camp Lodge we rented was an ideal setting for a group of this size. There was a male and female dorm attached to a main meeting room and an industrial kitchen—perfect for our needs. The screened-in porch was perfect for a quick game of badminton and the fire pit out back served as an ideal place for a group campfire Saturday night.



It was truly inspiring to see how all things fall into place for a very small group that had not previously hosted a regional gathering. Over the course of the weekend the cleaning Master's presence became more intense, along with an increasing atmosphere of love and mutual respect. While we all felt inspired after the weekend I think a few of us were in awe because we could not fully grasp what all had really transpired, as is often the case when receiving his grace.

Creating these opportunities to come together and taking the time to meet our fellow brothers and sisters often provide us with just what the heart needs.



Gainesville, Florida Gathering by Anurag Agarwal

The Gainesville, Florida, center hosted a gathering during the weekend of September 27th and 28th, 2008. The venue for the gathering was the India Cultural and Education Center. About 50 *abhyasis* and 20 children from Florida, Georgia and Alabama brought their hearts to the gathering. Brother John and Sister Betsy Barlow, who were visiting Florida that week, also attended the gathering. The theme of the gathering was "Here and Now," a continuation of the theme from the national gathering in Cleveland, Ohio (April, 2008). Master has been talking about the importance of the "Here and Now" in his talks since the 1970s. He often says, "forget the past, don't worry about the future, live in the present because the present is a gift." A collection of excerpts from his talks since the 1970s in which he talks about the "Here and Now" was distributed to *abhyasis* prior to the gathering.

Brother John Barlow conducted the Saturday morning *satsangh* and gave a talk in which he emphasized the importance of the practice more so in the present day and age than at any-time in the history of man because in the present day and age the mind has so many avenues of diversion that regulating it is more challenging than ever. A disciplined *sadhana* is an absolute requirement to experience our true divine self. He emphasized that if the practice is followed as prescribed, the results are replicable.



There were several talks emphasizing that if we put off our goal to some time in the future and if we keep putting it off, we will never get to the goal. As well, the talks emphasized that there needs to be a sense of urgency to experience reality here and now because the godly presence is here and now waiting to be felt by us.

There were children's activities organized by sister Tiffany Ballard. There was a bouncy house for the children to enjoy. All of the out-of-town *abhyasis* that stayed Friday night and/or Saturday night were accommodated at local *abhyasis*' homes. Several introductory sittings were given during the weekend.

San Luis Obispo, California Camping at Lake Lopez by Venkat Jayaraman

Abhyasis from California and nearby states have been congregating for an annual campout at the end of the summer for the past 10 years. The venue, Lake Lopez, is near San Luis Obispo, California. Lake Lopez is surrounded by mountains and offers lots of activities—hiking, boating, sailing, swimming, a water park, and open grounds for any kind of sports. Brother Bill and sister Diana Waycott have been the loving and gracious hosts for several years.



This year we had the opportunity to spend three nights and four days (Friday through Monday) at the camp grounds. *Abhyasis* came from Nevada, Arizona and even Canada. *Satsangh* was held in the mornings at 9 am and in the evening at 5 pm. The meditations were held in an open space and they were as close to nature as one can get. On Sunday, we had a group discussion based on profound questions brother Bill had given us designed to bring out meaningful insights into our spiritual life. In the afternoons, *abhyasis* had the opportunity to go boating, hiking or swimming.

On Saturday and Sunday nights there were bonfires, roasting marshmallows and singing songs in many languages, showing the diversity of people in *Sahaj Marg*. The bonfires lasted until midnight and even though we had had a long day, most of us were there until only embers remained.

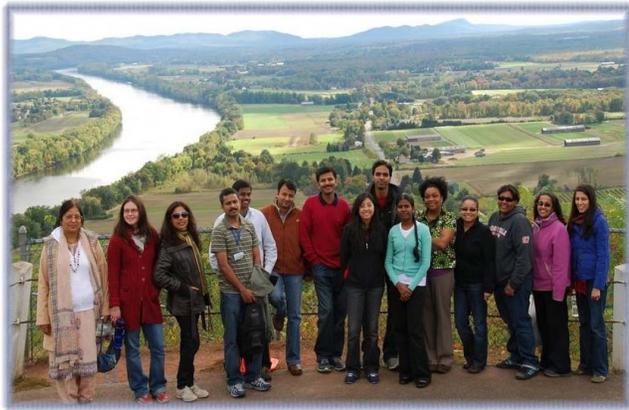
During the retreat, there were no distractions from our modern lifestyle—no internet, no television, no radio, no laptops, no newspaper and even no electricity. After 8 p.m. all of the lights go out and you remain one with nature. At night we could see the beauty of the stars and the various constellations. It reminds us that in our busy lives we don't even have time to lift our heads and look up at the sky.

When the long Labor Day weekend came to an end, we all left with happy faces but we were also sad that these three days ended so quickly. Many *abhyasis* stayed back and helped with cleanup. By Master's grace we left that place a much better place than it was when we arrived on Friday morning! I invite all brothers and sisters to join us next Labor Day weekend, 2009, for a true family spiritual gathering at Lake Lopez in California.





Sunderland, Massachusetts - Fall Picnic, by Sampath Kumar Srinivasan



On the 4th of October a troupe of 17 abhyasis set off from the Manhattan center to have a day trip to the Sunderland Ashram. The theme of the picnic was “Welcoming Fall” and the objective was to strengthen the sense of brotherhood within the special environment of the ashram. The group had some abhyasis who had not seen the Sunderland ashram before. This trip gave them the wonderful opportunity to experience the ashram environment and also to meet with other abhyasis at the center.

The day started off with a 3.5 hour drive from NYC to Sunderland. There was a pit stop on the way at the Olympus diner for breakfast (their pancakes are really something!). The first satsangh was at noon followed by a picnic lunch on the top of Sugarloaf Mountain. The blissful condition yielded by the satsangh coupled with the view and the air from the top of the mountain presented a wonderful feeling of harmony.

The rest of the afternoon was spent watching Master’s talk given at the inaugural session of CREST. The evening satsangh was at 6 p.m. after which the abhyasis cleaned up the ashram and hit the road to get back into the city. During the silent moments of the day, abhyasis contemplated their inner condition and also had the opportunity to form stronger bonds. We started the trip as a group of individuals and ended it in the evening as a team.

New York City, New York - Manhattan Gathering at Rio Galleries by Sampath Kumar Srinivasan

Every other month the Manhattan center has the pleasure of hosting a one-day gathering at Rio Galleries, an art gallery in uptown Manhattan. Our most recent gathering took place on Sunday, October 26th, and approximately 50 abhyasis from New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, and Rhode Island



participated. We were privileged to have Brother John and Sister Betsy Barlow in attendance.

After the morning satsangh, brother John started off the gathering with a moving talk. A pot-luck lunch followed, and since it was a beautiful day, abhyasis enjoyed their lunch outside on the veranda overlooking the Hudson River.

The theme for the gathering was; “As Inside, So Outside,” inspired by Revered Master's recent letter to abhyasis. After lunch, a few local abhyasis conducted the program, which entailed quiet reflection as well as group discussion. The gathering culminated with an afternoon satsangh and reading, after which we all dispersed, looking forward to the next time when we can again be together in his remembrance.

Warrenville, IL. - New Meditation Center

Compiled by Tracie Pape and Viji Balasubramanian

Faith is taking the first step even when you don’t see the whole staircase! That is how many Chicago area abhyasis felt as they inaugurated a meditation center on October 5, 2008, in Warrenville, Illinois, a suburb of the greater Chicago region. The center has a 2400 sq ft meditation room, a children’s room and a small kitchen/utility.

The inauguration day began with Sunday morning sat-



sangh and was filled with happiness and excitement. About 60 abhyasis and 15 children took part in the day’s activities. Many abhyasis came forward to give talks after the satsangh and spoke about the need to utilize the center correctly and completely. All of us prayed that we could come together and cooperate to fill this space with the Master, so that searching souls could step in and not feel like leaving the place. Satsanghs, weekly individual sittings, and monthly extended day programs are in place now and the walls are beginning to envelope his transmission, bringing us all immense joy.

Master sent his blessing for the occasion, saying, “I am happy, and this will surely have the blessings of my Master. Please proceed to utilize this place for spirituality ONLY. Love to all.” We pray that we remain guided by him and utilize this centre exactly as he envisions it. The Chicago region warmly welcomes all abhyasis to visit us in this center and take part in its activities.



South Kihei, Maui, Hawaii Center by Betsy Cammack

Visiting abhyasis have enriched our young center. In September 2007 and February 2008 we hosted abhyasis from California, Arizona and Montana at two small gatherings. The gathering themes were "Being" and "Becoming." The program took place on the weekend with abhyasis arriving on Thursdays and departing on Tuesdays in order to take maximum benefit of the special atmosphere of Hawaii. Hawaii is very much a "being" place, conducive to meditation and reflection.

Due to increased airfare these small group gatherings will not be organized for 2009. However, we invite individual preceptors and abhyasis to visit our center in South Kihei, Maui, when travelling to Hawaii. Those interested in sharing a focused topic with our local abhyasis will be welcomed as guests in my home for up to one week. Contact: Betsy Cammack (808) 874-8081, betsycammack@yahoo.com.



Important notice for visitors to Babuji Memorial Ashram, Manapakkam, India

With the permission of Rev. Master, we have employed professional security at the main gate of the Babuji Memorial Ashram, Manapakkam effective from 1st August 2008. Hence in the future, it is essential for abhyasis visiting the Manapakkam Ashram to carry their SRCM Abhyasi Card (Temporary or Permanent) and produce the same to the Security personnel at the main gate upon entry into the Ashram. It is to be noted that the Mission badge alone is not sufficient to enter the Ashram. If the SRCM Abhyasi card is not available, a signed letter of identification from your local centre-in-charge/prefect should be produced to the security personnel.

C. Rajagopalan, Zone-in-charge, Tamil Nadu (North)

Volunteers Needed for Reorganization of Sahaj Marg Websites

Rev. Master has recently provided his guidance for reorganizing both the SRCM and SMSF websites. He has also formed a website steering committee to manage the content, aesthetics and functionality of the official websites. He has emphasized that the sites need to convey the pure essence of Sahaj Marg and the Masters' messages. A geographically dispersed team has started working diligently on this task.

In order to achieve this objective in the scheduled timeline, the team is looking for volunteers who can assist in various areas of web site development including technical development skills in the following areas:

- Experience in working with Content Management Systems such as Joomla, Alfresco and InfoGlue
- HTML/XML, JSPs & Server-Side Java, Java Struts, PHP, My SQL Databases
- Graphic Design - Photoshop, Fireworks, Flash, etc.

If you have any of these or related skills and are interested in participating in the project, please write to Br. Dilip Mehra at dkmehra@yahoo.com, detailing your contact information and your specific skills.



Region In Charge & Regional Coordinators Corner

Letter from John Barlow, R.C. Region I, East

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

How quickly things change. A few months ago we were talking about a number of expansion projects for the Mission in the U.S. & Canada, including plans for expanding the Molena Ashram and the Sunderland Meditation Center, as well as investigations into the possibility of purchasing a meditation center in New Jersey and land in California. Since then our Master has requested that we put all Mission projects on hold (unless doing so will add additional expense) as we await the outcome of the present economic instability.

Additionally, he requested that the Mission hold off on any expenditures except for what is essential and only that which could be covered by current income. At the end of the circular he reiterated that we may apply the same principles to each of our individual lives and that current income should be used if one wishes to attend local and regional gatherings and not savings or borrowed money, paying careful attention to the needs of the family.

Master has also spoken recently on character development and affirmed "that while it was HIS duty to give the abhyasis inner spiritual growth, character formation was, and will always be, the abhyasis' personal business." He went on to say that the "culture/society" that we happen to be born into does not absolve us of our own inner compass. "A body of universally applicable teaching MUST reflect principles and practices that will be all encompassing, transcending the cultural, religious and behavioural norms laid down for people not involved with personal spiritual development." So in effect we are held to a higher ideal.

A quote from Whispers speaks to this most succinctly. As Babuji communicates, "It is important not to harm others. On the basis of this principle, a spiritual process can be established favourably. As the human being is not perfect, he should not dwell on the weakness of others. He has enough to do with himself, but many of our brothers are busy observing the others, and neglecting their own faults... It is so much easier to apply this policy and to think that only the others must change." (*Whispers, Wednesday, May 14, 2003*)

I believe there is always a need to look for ideas and insight as to how best to approach our own individual character development, which might also be thought of as development of "conscience." When I am unsure of how to proceed, I sometimes ask myself, if I wrote to Master tonight

and asked his opinion of this action, what would he say? As Babuji has said, we should not do something that "pricks" the heart of another, a universally applicable guideline.

John Barlow

Report by Diana Waycott, R.C. Region II, West

This fall has seen a variety of activity in the western US. It began with the annual camping weekend over Labor Day Weekend near San Luis Obispo. The weekend included a prefect workshop, campfires, hiking, boating and meditations throughout. Over 150 adults and children enjoyed sleeping in tents and living in nature.

Portland hosted a camping weekend Nov. 14-16, but you didn't need to bring tents for their weekend gathering. Cabins, kitchen, and meditation room allowed for a great opportunity to gather, meditate and contemplate. This is also an annual event, so you can look for this next year. Earlier in November the abhyasis from New Mexico and Colorado gathered in Santa Fe and turned their attention to the Fourth Maxim.



Brother Poul Juul visiting with San Francisco abhyasis

In October, Poul Juul, head of the European Mission, came to San Francisco for a conference. This was a rare treat for us on the West Coast as few visitors from so far away reach us. The abhyasis in the area met with him in San Francisco and Fremont; deep meditations were followed by helpful question and answer sessions. The Bay Area abhyasis have been looking seriously for ashram property for a year now, however the economic downturn has forced us to put that on hold as per Master's instructions.

Nearly twenty prefects from B.C., Oregon, Washington and Montana gathered in Seattle November 8th for a prefect workshop lead by Bill and Diana Waycott. It was most beneficial for all and we hope to hold another in the springtime.

If you are traveling to Salt Lake City or Boise, please know that in those cities we have centers without prefects who would love to have visitors.

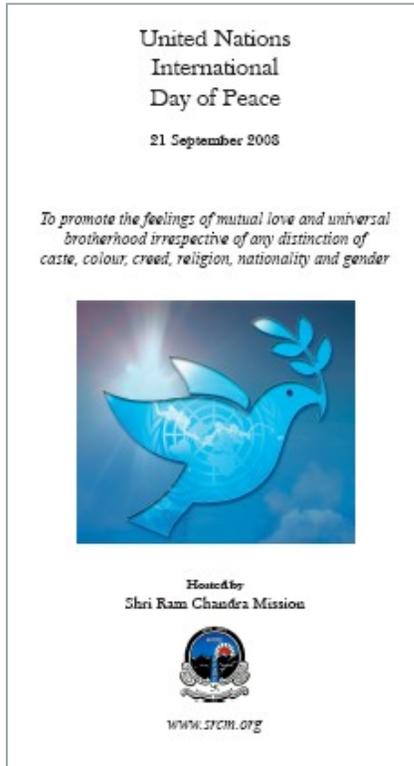


Report by Kim Hansen, R.C. Region V, Canada & Alaska

By Master's Grace, there is a fresh new wave of interest, activity and enthusiasm rippling across the region. In some centers there has recently been a shift from long-term planning of events to impromptu, spontaneous gatherings, discussions, shared meals and so forth.

On the Labor Day weekend abhyasis from Ottawa, Sherbrooke, Montreal and Toronto (with visitors from Buffalo (NY) and Paris (France) as well!), gathered at a Girl Guide camp in the countryside near the shore of Lake Ontario, about two hours east of Toronto. It was a joyful and spiritually charged weekend. The children happily enjoyed the fresh air, playing in the grass and on the rocky beach and swimming with their elders.

The following weekend we gathered with brothers and sisters from many B.C. centers at Camp Pringle on Vancouver Island. Several abhyasis from Calgary, Toronto and Seattle joined the gathering as well. The program was punctuated by the just-received *Hubble Bubble* videos. It was wonderful to bask in Master's divine presence. The children were joyful. On Saturday afternoon under a blue sky a question and answer session focused largely on the experience of being at the SPURS ranch in Texas. The lake provided a lovely backdrop for early morning reflection. A prefect meeting was held, with most prefects of the region present.



On September 21 a number of centers in Canada hosted events to commemorate the U.N. International Day of Peace. In mid-October on the Canadian Thanksgiving weekend we had a week-end gathering at the Toronto Center, followed by a blessed visit from John and Betsy Barlow who breezed through town the next Monday evening. After a meeting of local prefects, John conducted satsangh at the Center, which was followed by an informal session, a light meal and informal sharing.

Abhyasis of the Vancouver Center will hold their second annual arts and crafts auction in December to raise funds for a future ashram. Meanwhile, in October/November, abhyasis in all centers held meetings to share ideas and visions for the first ashram in Canada. All of the notes will be combined and shared to make it a truly regional conversation.

On behalf of everyone north of the international border, we invite all brothers and sisters to visit and join us for special events or at anytime at all. It is always a delight and spiritually enriching to welcome abhyasis from other centers - the next best thing to welcoming Master himself!

Report by Balaji Narayan, R.C. Region IV, South

In the southern region we have seen a renewed enthusiasm in our efforts to feel his divine presence in our daily lives as well as taking his message to the larger humanity. We had several wonderful gatherings in Texas, Louisiana, North Carolina, Molena and Florida during the months of August, September and October. Each one of them was joyful and spiritually charged by his benevolent grace. There were two prefect workshops that were held in Austin and Clearwater. Everyone gathered left with love-filled hearts and a resolve to rededicate themselves in his remembrance and to his service.

We had great turnouts for the SRCM-sponsored activities to commemorate the UN International Day of Peace in New Orleans, San Antonio, Atlanta, Austin and Dallas. We had 50 to 60 people come together in some cities to pray the universal prayer written by Revered Babuji Maharaj. We are looking forward to the UN Human Rights Day on December 10th for another opportunity to take his message to our brothers and sisters in the larger community.

I am looking forward to the regional gathering over the New Year weekend, to be held in Molena. I plan to be with my family at the ashram during this time.

Recently, one abhyasis from Austin met with beloved Master in Chennai. He asked Master for a message to take back. Master said "Progress faster. Time goes faster than you think."



Opportunities & Events

Term Residency Program at the Molena ashram

The SRCM North American ashram is offering a Term-Residency program for abhyasis who would like to live at the Molena Ashram for a defined period of time, be a part of the community, and get a feel for ashram life and organization. The Term-Residency program is for abhyasis who are able to dedicate 1 to 6 months to staying at the ashram and would like to devote that period of time to both spiritual evolution and active participation in the work of Sahaj Marg and other ashram activities. There is no fixed fee for the program, but term-residents may be asked to contribute nominally toward the cost of food and utilities.

The atmosphere at the 32-acre wooded hilltop ashram, located in Molena, Georgia (about 60 miles south of Atlanta), is always spiritually charged, and the calm and peace that prevails there is conducive for spiritual pursuit. Living at an ashram provides a unique experience of being in a special environment conducive to change and spiritual evolution. At the ashram, you will have a designated prefect and will be able to participate in satsanghs. From time to time, there will also be study and training programs on the Sahaj Marg philosophy and way of life.

Your stay will be a balance of three components: spiritual immersion, practical work, and brotherhood. You may participate in self-study and can use the Ashram library as part of your spiritual program. Together with caretakers at the ashram you will identify the tasks that are appropriate for you. Some of the work areas at the ashram are: the kitchen, gardening, building maintenance, and organizing seminars.

If you are interested in participating in the program please contact the Molena Ashram Management Committee at molena@srcm.org. To learn more: <http://www.srcm.org/centers/na/us/ashrams/molena/index.jsp>.



Call for Newsletter Items

The goal of *Echoes of North America* is to foster love and connections between and among abhyasis and the Master in North America. As such, we need your contributions!

Please send **short (200-300 words) articles** and photographs on your gatherings, trips with Master, and visits to ashrams or retreat centers. While we cannot use everything that is sent to us, we will do our best possible to make sure the entire North American region is well-represented in the newsletter. Articles should contain basic facts (e.g., date, number of attendees, location) and focus on the human interest element (the interactions and experiences of participants).

To be included in the March newsletter, please send submissions by February 15, 2009 to:

EchoesNA@sahajmarg.org

Calendar submissions for the March issue should include gatherings and similar events for the months of March, April and May *only* and should follow format as seen on page 11 of this newsletter.



United Nations International Human Rights Day

The Shri Ram Chandra Mission is associated with the United Nations (UN) Department of Public Information and shares a commitment to the organization to highlight UN International Days. These days address concerns of global importance and the upcoming UN Human Rights Day, on December 10, 2008, is one of those days.

We strongly urge all centers in North America to commemorate UN Human Rights Day during the week of December 8-14, with December 10 the preferred date. To assist you in planning and in clarifying your activities, every region in North America has an abhyasis designated as the contact person for this event. Following are the contacts and their emails:

Region I	Chris Jackson	cjackson1@hotmail.com
Region II	Sharon Porter	sporter@centurytel.net
Region III	Doris Dorsey	doridrew@sbcglobal.net
Region IV	Krishna Sai	home.sai@gmail.com
Region V (East)	Janet Yates	janet.yates@cyberus.ca
Region V (West)	Elaine Rzemieniak	rzem@telus.net

A package of powerpoints, flyers, and information has been developed for use in planning and implementing events associated with UN International Days (see sample below). The materials are in template format and can be tailored to your center and activities.

We invite all persons to join the expression of tolerance and brotherhood by supporting the UN International Days as well as taking part in the daily 9 p.m. Universal Prayer.



**UNIVERSAL
DECLARATION
OF HUMAN
RIGHTS**

Dignity and justice for all of us

Meditation For Human Integration

United Nations International Human Rights Day

Join us in a special effort in observing the United Nations International Human Rights Day to promote the feelings of mutual love and universal brotherhood. We will join together in silent prayer-meditation for 15 minutes. This event is open to all.

10 December 2008, 6:00 PM



Calendar of Events

Dec. 7, 2008	Washington D.C.	Day Long Gathering	meditate_dc@yahoo.com
Dec. 10, 2008	Worldwide	U.N. Human Rights Day	doridrew@sbcglobal.net
Dec. 10, 2008	Los Angeles, CA	U.N. Human Rights Day Event	prasad.singamsetty@sun.com
Dec. 13, 2008	Los Angeles, CA	New Abhyasi Workshop	prasad.singamsetty@sun.com
Dec. 14, 2008	Beavercreek Ashram	Extended Sunday Program	som.soni@zoomtown.com
Dec. 14, 2008	Fraser Valley, Canada	Extended Sunday Program	cprisland@shaw.ca
Dec. 14, 2008	Irvine, CA (Los Angeles & Orange County)	Extended Sunday Program	prasad.singamsetty@sun.com
Dec. 14, 2008	Manhattan, NY	Full Day Gathering	sampath.k.srinivasan@gmail.com
Dec. 28, 2008	Vancouver, Canada	Extended Sunday Program	louannebryant@yahoo.ca
Dec. 31, 2008-Jan. 1, 2009	Bay Area, CA	New Year Gathering	sadhup@yahoo.com
Dec. 31, 2008-Jan. 1, 2009	Sunderland Ashram	Gathering	colleensackheim@yahoo.com
Jan. 1, 2009	Toronto Centre	New Year Gathering	srcmcan@ica.net
Jan. 1, 2009	Molena Ashram	Prefect Workshop (Region IV)	balaji@email.com
Jan. 2 - 4, 2009	Molena Ashram	New Year Gathering	madhavan.bharath@gmail.com
Jan. 4, 2009	Washington D.C.	Day Long Gathering	meditate_dc@yahoo.com
Jan. 11, 2009	Beavercreek Ashram	Extended Sunday Program	som.soni@zoomtown.com
Jan. 11, 2009	Fraser Valley, Canada	Extended Sunday Program	cprisland@shaw.ca
Jan. 25, 2009	Vancouver, Canada	Extended Sunday Program	louannebryant@yahoo.ca
Jan. 31 - Feb. 1, 2009	Dallas, TX	TX-OK-LA Gathering	urmil2@yahoo.com
Jan. 31 - Feb. 2, 2009	Phoenix, AZ	Regional Gathering - Basant	mysakha@hotmail.com
Feb. 1, 2009	Washington D.C.	Day Long Gathering	meditate_dc@yahoo.com
Feb. 2, 2009	All Canada Centers	Basant Celebration	srcmcan@ica.net
Feb. 8, 2009	Beavercreek Ashram	Extended Sunday Program	som.soni@zoomtown.com
Feb. 8, 2009	Fraser Valley, Canada	Extended Sunday Program	cprisland@shaw.ca
Feb. 15, 2009	Manhattan, NY	Full Day Gathering	sampath.k.srinivasan@gmail.com
Feb. 22, 2009	Vancouver, Canada	Extended Sunday Program	louannebryant@yahoo.ca

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