

# Echoes of North America

A Quarterly Newsletter - Volume 2 issue 2

December 2009

## Message for North America

Conveyed to the Seminar Held at the Molena Ashram, USA  
via Tele-conference, 11<sup>th</sup> October 2009

So, Sisters and Brothers,

I hope you can all hear me. Yes, you can? Janmarie, can you see and hear? Okay!

I am a little sad that I can't be there with you all, but that I have to speak to you across half the globe, you know, and suffer these distortions of space and time because of equipment. I saw you all meditating some time ago, and I thought I would advance this — whatever we are doing now — by half-an-hour to half past six local time here, so that you will be free of me sooner than you expected!

Are there any specific questions? Because as far as I am concerned, I have very little to say except to say, keep on — keep moving. First the horse walks, then it trots, then it canters, and then it gallops. You got it? Walk, trot, canter, gallop. So I am happy to see that all of our abhyasi sisters and brothers are getting a little revitalized, because to me it appears that the Mission in the U.S. had gone into some sort of — I won't say coma, but a partial sort of sleep mode.

Like, you know, a sick man requires blood transfusion, the Mission requires abhyasi transfusion, more and more, better and better. Not as Babuji said, less and less of more and more, or more and more of less and less, but we do want more and more to come in, more and more to be blessed by him, and more and more to benefit by our spiritual practice, which is so universal and so simple that its simplicity is mistaken for ineffectiveness. People say, "How can this work?" We should prevail on them to try it, without bias of caste, colour, creed, race, religion, all these things. Give it an honest trial and see after three months.

You know, we have abhyasis who have been there for thirty years, and from whom I receive mails saying, "Wow! Only just now I am realizing what there is in Sahaj Marg!"

So it shouldn't take so long. It depends on both: you have to apply yourself; we have to do the work. And that way if you do things, results will be faster, more convincing, so that our future efforts are more and more strengthened from inside, with a will that is no longer blocked by the intellect, but now the *will* will sort of regulate the intellect, and say, "You obey me. You are a machine, thinking machine. When I want you to think, I will tell you what to think." Very much like a computer, you know. The human being has been able to create enormous thinking capacity in computers, and to order them. But as far as our own computer here [the mind] is concerned, we have not been able to regulate this [the mind]. It is going haywire all the time, and this [the mind] is controlling this [the heart], therefore our heart is also going astray. We have all the problems of the heart. So once we regulate this [the heart] and put Him on the horse where He belongs, our life is going to be exceptionally smooth — heart-governed, not brain-governed, and exactly what Babuji Maharaj wants.

Is it okay? Let me see a smile!

Thank you. As I said, you know, I repeat again, I wish I were there with you all. I miss you all very much, and I miss Molena very much. And I wish I was forty years younger so that I could start life all over again, building the ashram there, clearing the weeds, getting sick in the foot, things like that! Those were fun days. We had a great deal of fun, we had a great deal of almost-adventure, and that was how the Mission was built. You know, it is what you Americans call the pioneering spirit. I want you all to work together to bring that back, the pioneering spirit. Let each one become the pioneer of the soul. Okay?

I wish you all happiness, joy and togetherness for the period that you are there; and togetherness and brotherhood to develop more and more until we can't remain without meeting each other as often as we can.

May Master bless all of you. Thank you.



MASTER'S NEWS	Pg 1
THE UNITING FACTOR	Pg 4
COORDINATORS CORNER	Pg 5
CHILDREN'S CORNER	Pg 6
ASHRAM & CENTER NEWS	Pg 7
SPURS RETREAT	Pg 9
UNITED NATIONS	Pg 10
NEW PUBLICATIONS	Pg 11
CALENDAR	Pg 12



*I wish the gathering had been three months instead of three days.*

*Faith Romano, 9 years old, Floyd County, VA.*



*Strangely, being at the ashram felt so much like "being in India," and yet, also, as if we had been transported to a different world. To me, the whole visit was like one long satsangh.*

*Lavanya Delip, Minneapolis, MN*



*What has also stayed with me is the way he smiled when speaking about the ashram in Molena. He said that he wished he were forty years younger and could go back and build the ashram all over again. When he smiled and said, "Those were fun days!" he appeared to shed those forty years! It made me long to give him that gift by putting my heart into bringing another ashram here to North America.*

*Suzanne Garner, Santa Clara, CA*



*For me the seminar was such a joyful event. Just being—full of joy. It was the coming together of brothers and sisters that created this joy. And Master being in the meditation hall via the Internet—so present, so loving. And when he said he wished he were forty years younger I was touched and moved. We were all there, including Babuji's children—lost and liberated.*

*Tom Hansen, Toronto, Canada*

*On a sultry Georgia evening I took my first sitting and an inner sunrise heralded the dawn. We rose before dawn and meditated, and when I saw your face and heard your voice tears poured from my eyes, but my heart sang. My heart sang for you, dear Master, and I was surrounded by people who called me "sister" from dawn until deep into the sultry Georgia evening.*

*Carolyn Romano, 18 years old, Floyd County, VA.*



*I wonder if this is what the new humanity will be like—each person doing whatever work is theirs, with joy and satisfaction. Then by some miracle the whole undertaking works.*

*Terran Daily, Arcata, CA*

*I could feel the lightness and it was evident that Master had been working to prepare the atmosphere. At the end we all were so very blessed to have Master visit us via a telecommunication in which he expressed his sentiments of love and his longing to be with us. It was a perfect ending to a perfect gathering.*

*Sylvia Christian, Cleveland, OH*

## Two Important Announcements from Brother Ajay

### Master's Birthday to be Celebrated in Lucknow

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I am very happy to inform you all that Rev. Master has been kind enough to permit us to celebrate His 84th Birthday celebrations at Shri Ram Chandra Mission Ashram, Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh) from 23rd July 2010 to 25th July 2010. This information may be circulated to all the centres in your area so that abhyasis can plan their travel. I invite all abhyasis to participate in this celebration and be in the presence of our Beloved Master. Detailed information will be sent in a short while.

Love and Regards,  
Ajay Bhattar



### Whispers from the Brighter World – A Third Revelation

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We are all familiar with the messages that have been published in the last few years under the title – **Whispers from the Brighter World** – mainly messages from our Beloved Babuji Maharaj, Lalaji Maharaj and other spiritualized entities. There is a wealth of meaning in these messages and the same is also being put in our Mission website everyday. As Babuji Maharaj himself says – “Good things must be repeated. Need to be repeated.”

In the words of my Master – they emphasize again and again – “My dear, what I ask of you is nothing. Literally nothing. Sit with your eyes closed comfortably. Imagine divine light in your heart. Meditate for an hour or at least for half an hour. Do the cleaning in the evening. No effort. No barbells. No dumb bells. Nothing to walk on. Tread mills. And at night a simple prayer. Remembering what Babuji said, “Prayer must not be begging’.” All religious prayer is begging. In spirituality, a prayer, as our prayer is, is a statement of fact. This I am; that you are. Between me and you is a whole universe. Please make it possible to bridge this gap. And for this, your help is essential. It is a statement; it is a request. We pray not only for ourselves, but for everybody else, all over the world. There are no differences, there are no races, there are no religions. There are only human beings. As human beings, we pray for everybody else.

We have reiterated time and again, in our assemblies, in our satsanghs, that these important messages are there, given by Him in His beautiful, simple language. All requesting, not ordering. It is strange, that we don't want to obey a Master who never orders, because we are too much in the tradition of being ordered around by *gods, by gurus, by commanders, by captains, by governments*. We are too much used to the twin instruments of religion—*fear and temptation*—so that we come to Sahaj Marg with suspicion based on centuries of bad experience, given to us by our culture, by our tradition, by our religion. Obey and get; don't obey and suffer.”

I am happy to announce that we hope to release the third volume of **Whispers from the Brighter World** in 2010 and will be titled – **A Third Revelation**. I request you to circulate this important information to all so that they can book their copy well in advance. The details of booking the same will be sent separately. As my Beloved Master mentioned – mere reading these Messages will remove most of our samskaras provided we are sincere and are reading to benefit. May it be so for each one of us. I pray for all.

Regards,  
Ajay

## The Uniting Factor

By Jean Appleby, Cleveland, OH

***Sahaj Marg says this is a universal method. It is universally applicable. We must shed, throw away, cast-off everything that differentiates one person from another.***

From a talk given on Nov. 23, 2008,  
"Character is Pure Love" (Chariji)

Over 1,000 abhyasis attended the North American seminar held in Molena, Georgia from October 9-12, 2009. The theme of the seminar was "Sahaj Marg – It's Universality," suggesting what unifies us all and our common humanity. One example of brotherhood I observed was abhyasis preparing and serving meals and cheerfully doing endless rounds of dishes together. The common purpose to serve Master and to benefit from our spiritual practice was evident in everyone's faces.



The theme of universality was featured in a presentation about Shri Ram Chandra Mission becoming formally associated as a non-governmental organization with the United Nations Department of Public Information in December 2005. Over 1500 organizations worldwide that share values with the UN contribute to support the common good. The Mission's contribution is for all abhyasis everywhere to say the Universal prayer daily at 9:00 P.M. in support of human integration and the spiritual upliftment of all. As Master says, "When we want one humankind, one humanity, one world, perhaps one universe someday, we have to find the uniting factor, not the dividing factor! And that is what I think spirituality is all about." (UNDPI Association. <http://www.srcm.org>.)

A true highlight of the seminar was seeing and hearing Master and experiencing his presence via videoconference the morning of October 11<sup>th</sup>. He seemed joyful, laughing several times and genuinely delighted to see us as the camera panned out to capture all assembled in the meditation tent. He was happy to see that we are "getting a little revitalized" and he urged us to keep on...keep moving. He spoke of the importance of regulating the mind. When the mind is going "haywire," the heart is also going astray. He reminded us Babuji wants abhyasis who are "heart governed, not brain-governed."

I was so moved by Master's wish to be in Molena. The tone of his message was filled with such love and sincerity in his desire to be with us. I could not help but think of the first time I met Master in 1992 when he came to inaugurate the Molena ashram. Through technology, I was now experiencing a heart-to-heart connection as he spoke that was as true and moving as his physical presence in our meeting years before.

He reminisced about building the ashram as an example of how the Mission was built and encouraged us to work together to bring back the pioneering spirit. As quickly as we converged on Molena to attend the seminar and experience a glimpse of what we can be, it was time to return to our homes. Inspired by his invitation for each of us to "become the pioneer of the soul," we need now to simply heed his call to apply ourselves to the work for faster results.

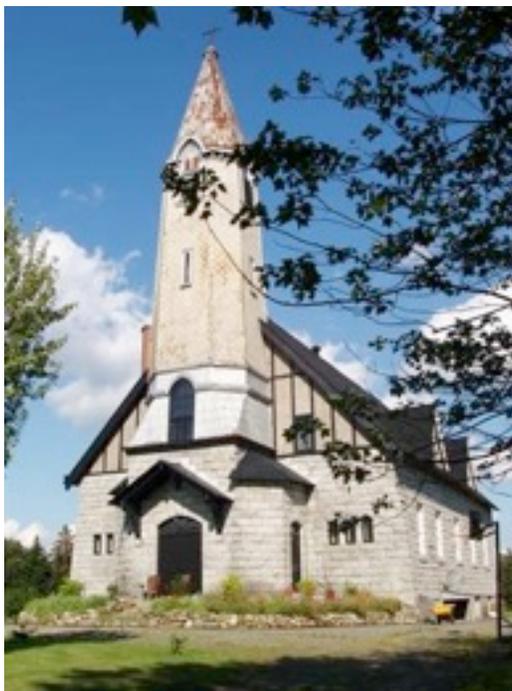


## Coordinators Corner

### Kim Hansen, R.C., Canada/Alaska

In July 2007 Master said we need an ashram in Canada. Since then, an abhyasi brother has sent me dozens of real estate ads for properties spread across this vast country. One of the ads caught the attention recently -- an old church in a tiny village that sits on the Quebec/Vermont border. At the Canadian Board of Directors meeting in July of this year in Tiruppur, Master made reference to churches in the context of a discussion about a future ashram in Canada. Well, one thing leads to another, like following the clues.

The abhyasis of Montreal and Sherbrooke went to see the property in October and felt the place had potential to become an ashram. Since then they've been researching the building construction, zoning, distances to centres in the region and other practicalities.



At the end of November, we will visit the little church with abhyasis from Quebec, Ontario, Vermont and Massachusetts and have satsangh there. It's an interesting prospect, an ashram lying right on the international border, with the village general store literally sitting half in Canada and half in the U.S.! Only Master knows if there will ever be an ashram in Stanhope. For now, it's beautiful to observe and feel the enthusiasm and harmony that happens when abhyasis work together for a common purpose. Stay tuned!



### John Barlow, R.C., East Region

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

One and a half years ago our Master changed the structure of the mission in North America. First, he appointed P.R. Krishna to be the Region in Charge of North America. At the same time he appointed five abhyasis to be responsible for the five regions North America was divided into, which are Canada/Alaska (Kim Hansen), the eastern states (John Barlow), middle states (Raga Ragavendran), southern states (Balaji Narayan) and western states (Diana Waycott). He also stated that each year there would be a rotation of leadership among the Regional Coordinators, as they are called. My time in the leadership role comes to an end on December 31, 2009, and Diana Waycott, the RC of the Western Region, fills the role for the upcoming year. It has been an interesting year with many changes and yet much to do.

In the end, it seems to me that there are a few basic concepts that when followed, produce the result we all aspire to attain. We start out with the idea that we want to develop our spiritual life, something has started to awaken inside, and because we are practicing Sahaj Marg, we have found a system we feel will assist in opening the door. We may also believe that we have found a spiritual guide that can help us to attain this goal. From there on it is very much up to us – how determined we are to attain the goal, how much will power we will put into it, how high a priority will it have in our day to day lives.

Our Master has a favorite saying, All this and heaven too. We would like to attain God realization and we would like to acquire all the things of the world. It seems though that the priority has to be God, and then we get everything else automatically. The inner realization it appears, far surpasses any of the tangible material things we could acquire. I suppose the difficult part *is believing* this while one is waiting for the experience. I think this might be the definition of the word faith. The beauty of our practice is that it offers the “goal of life” from the start. If that is what we really want, then we have been given a tool to bring it about. The steps are clearly laid out, morning meditation for one hour, evening cleaning for thirty minutes, individual sitting every two weeks and attending satsangh weekly. Plus the universal prayer and night time prayer. In some ways it seems like a lot, but for “the goal of life” is it really that much? My understanding is that in the past it took meditating all day for years to attain the goal, if it happened even then. So this is unique. It's something that fits well with the times we live in, a time when we have the maximum distractions possible, and yet we have the maximum tool possible to help us. We are indeed fortunate to have been born now.

How to affect global change? Our Master has said time and again, that when we change ourselves, we are changing a part of everything. As we become more subtle, we affect more than just ourselves. A subtle thought has more power, as he has said, so a subtle thought of Love must be very powerful. A few days ago, I had a brief conversation with our guide which I paraphrase here. He said, “It appears things are going well in the U.S.” I said to him that the timing must be right for this to happen. And to this he replied, “It is because we are all working together (selflessly) that the timing is right.” In effect, I think what he was saying is that we create our own reality, and when we work together selflessly, we are creating the foundation for the future of Sahaj Marg in North America.

I look forward to meeting with many of you throughout the East region and when possible in other areas, and hopefully we will have another gathering in this next year when we can all be together with his love and blessings.

**News from SRCM West**  
**By Diana Waycott, RC, West Region**

The big news in the West is the approaching reality of a West Coast ashram! Negotiations are proceeding with regard to a promising property in the San Francisco Bay Area. Our beloved Master has said that this property must be "a gift from above." Truly, the potential for utilization and growth in this location is excellent! Master planted the seed for this opportunity over twenty years ago when he visited the West Coast. May this long-awaited blessing come to fruition and serve mankind. We are ready!

Meanwhile, in the Los Angeles area, a generous abhyasi has donated part of a building for the Mission to use as a meditation center. This structure, too, is centrally located and

has the potential to serve many in that area. We are so grateful.

In early November, a regional gathering was held at Camp Adams, a private camp in the lush woods of the Oregon Cascade Mountains. Over fifty participants came from Oregon, Washington, Canada, Idaho, and California. The Camp Adams gathering is becoming an annual event for the region, and it is greatly appreciated by all who have attended.

The Bay Area will host its traditional gathering over the New Year's holiday. All are invited to join as we bring a new year filled with hope and joy.

## Children's Corner

**Children and Youth Steering Committee Update**  
**By Tracie Pape, Evanston, IL**

We all had a wonderful time at the National Gathering in Molena. The Children and Youth program included a Sahaj Family Life corner, a children's tent, a preteen-and-teen's tent, and a cultural program. The children and young people enjoyed being with their friends, learning about Sahaj Marg, and engaging in creative activities. A wonderful video about the gathering, prepared by the teenagers, has been posted for everybody's enjoyment at <http://www.sahajmarg.org/media-gallery/featured-gatherings/molena-2009/youth-video>.

Essential to the success of the entire program was the involvement of parents and other interested adults.

The Children and Youth Steering Committee is now planning a Family Seminar, which will be held on June 23 – 27, 2010, at the Molena ashram. The Family Seminar held at the Vrads Sande ashram in Denmark has been well attended for years, and we want to bring the program to North America.

This event will provide families and friends with a chance to vacation together and enjoy the wonderful spiritual environment at the Molena ashram. Children of all ages will have an opportunity to create friendships with other children coming from many different parts of North America.

We will keep you posted about the details of this program, and we hope that you will mark your calendars and join us.

Parents and other interested abhyasis are invited to submit children's and young people's artwork, or video clips of their activities, for posting on the Mission's web site. Please send all materials to [tracieo@sbc.global.net](mailto:tracieo@sbc.global.net).



**Before**



**After**



## Ashram and Center News

### Group Work at the Sunderland Ashram: A New Coat (or Two or Three) of Paint

By Harlan Smith, Greenfield, MA

It has been 13 years since our Master inaugurated the Sunderland Ashram, and, from the beginning, the commitment to use it well has been evident. The ashram has hosted approximately 100 regional gatherings, accommodating from 70 to 200 abhyasis and family members each time. Everyone has always taken good care of the ashram, but when we received approval this past September for a new paint job, the brothers and sisters of our center knew that we had been given a very different kind of opportunity: to work closely together, to practice constant remembrance and to carry out a fairly demanding volunteer project -- in harmony, and with the expectation of professional results.

Preparations took place with a lot of mutual consultation. Our paint choices would have to satisfy multiple demands. Things went smoothly. The volunteers worked at whatever tasks they



were reasonably confident with. Some, who had more experience, advised and demonstrated their own techniques, but everyone managed to play an important role and often had to quickly jump between different wall areas or tasks. Although those who worked the longest, and on more than one weekend, pushed themselves way past their physical comfort zones, there was never a grumble. Each one knew that if anyone "let down," it would sap everyone's determination to finish.

Finally, and with a bit of humor coming to the rescue, even some spilled paint became comic relief for us. Our efforts to figure how far to go to get it *perfect* became a dance of subtle give and take – between knowing there is always more one can do and asking, at what point "will anyone even notice?" The final result was fine, and admired by everybody; but we all know that the real purposes of our volunteer work were to keep Master's presence active, to keep our egos passive, and to move a little closer to the real feeling of being sisters and brothers – painting!

### Our Day Long Gathering By the Abhyasis of the Minneapolis, MN Center

We had a day long gathering at the Minneapolis center on November 7, 2009. It offered us an opportunity to be in Master's remembrance very naturally for the whole day. We also got the chance to share with each other what Sahaj Marg has offered to each of us and how it is making a difference in our lives – at work, at home, and elsewhere. We had thirteen abhyasis in attendance.



We started with morning satsangh and then watched a video from a series of talks that Master gave in Kolkata. In this particular talk, Master touched on the subject of fostering universal brotherhood, which was also one of the main purposes of our gathering – to enable us to know each other and to promote a feeling of brotherhood among ourselves. Afterward, we had a light lunch.

Then we assembled for a small workshop on the basics of Sahaj Marg sadhana. That was the topic that many abhyasis had wanted to discuss, so, in advance, we had distributed a handout with some questions designed to facilitate discussion on the topics of meditation, transmission, cleaning, and prayer.

This session was very simple, but it gave us the motivation to improve our sadhana. There were some clarifications and discussion about how we can make constant remembrance part of our daily routine, both at work and at home. This discussion was also ego-shredding, in a way, since each of us could openly

address our issues with the practice and also take in suggestions made by fellow abhyasis. We dispersed in the evening after sitting for satsangh and then enjoying a video of our revered Master.

We agreed unanimously that these day long workshops help abhyasis to develop their understanding and devote themselves to their practice with the required seriousness. We have now decided to have an extended satsangh one Sunday a month. May Master bless us all.

## Local Gathering on Peace and Prayer By Riva Richmond, New York City, NY

The New York City and Jersey City, N.J. centers came together on Sunday, September 20, for a full-day gathering at the Polytechnic Institute in Brooklyn, N.Y. The theme was "Peace and Prayer", chosen in celebration of the International Day of Peace.

After attending morning meditation and taking breakfast, we listened to a selection of readings on the subject of prayer. There were several passages on the Sahaj Marg prayer, which we recite in the morning and again at bedtime. Mentally reciting the prayer, a statement of facts, devoid of begging, creates a connection to Master in the morning, and embeds its spiritual meaning in our subconscious as we fall asleep at night. The prayer is given as from a lover to the Beloved, offered with a heart full of devotion, ready to receive Divine grace and resigned to Divine will.

We also heard a story recounted by Master. He once went to a preceptor's home for a sitting at a time when Chennai was flooded. He spent 50 minutes thinking about how to get home safely and praying to Babuji that, if his time had come, he should go without suffering. When Master left for home, a bus appeared miraculously. The message? "If you are willing to say, 'Yes, I am with you,' though the way physically becomes harder and harder, spiritually it becomes easier and easier."

The readings concluded with passages about prayer for others, which, in Sahaj Marg, is formalized in the Universal Prayer: at 9:00 pm, we meditate for fifteen minutes, thinking, in Babuji's words, "that all brothers and sisters are being filled with love and devotion and that real faith is growing stronger in them." This part of our practice keeps us connected to the world around us, creates a "union between hearts," and is, in itself, a road to peace.

## Cranbury Ashram By Krishna Linga

The New Jersey ashram is located in Monroe Township, New Jersey. As the approval process for site modifications progresses with the county, abhyasis in the New Jersey area have started to work on various projects in the ashram. The work began in earnest early summer of this year. As the word spread, the numbers of abhyasis for voluntary work began to increase significantly. This volume then took the shape of various committees designated for specific work. These include fundraising, maintenance projects, one-time projects and communication. The harmony and drive in the abhyasi teams resonates with Master's beautiful vision for this project. With the work gathering momentum, one can feel the transformation in the ashram atmosphere.

The following is an update of the various tasks underway and completed:

- Discussions with the local authorities to procure the various permits needed for civil work modifications like parking lots, bathrooms etc.
- Overall renovation of the caretaker apartment will be completed before Christmas, including flooring, bathroom, kitchen and the heating system.
- Window restoration, water system repair, heating system start-up and maintenance.
- Flooring in the entry foyer was completed and the kitchen has also been organized and is fully functional.
- General cleaning and maintenance such as lawn mowing and ashram cleaning are ongoing tasks

Significant effort is being put into key areas like fundraising, affordable contractor selection for parking lots construction, sewer lines etc. As we look back, work that started on a small scale has now gained significant momentum. With the goal in sight, we are grateful for the wonderful opportunity

Master has bestowed upon us to participate in his work in the form of an ashram.

We are anticipating the approval of the site plan in December which would be a green signal for the construction to commence. Everyone is welcome to visit and

share in this wonderful experience. For more information please contact brothers Krishna Linga [sahajmarg2003@hotmail.com](mailto:sahajmarg2003@hotmail.com) or Murali Garikipati [ngarik@gmail.com](mailto:ngarik@gmail.com).



## Realizing the Love of the Master: A Regional Gathering and Workshop

By Susan Coleman, Portland, OR

The Portland, Oregon center held its annual regional gathering on November 6-8, 2009 at Camp Adams in Molalla, Oregon, about forty-five minutes from Portland.

This year the theme, and the subject of our workshop, was Realizing the Love of the Master.

One idea that emerged during the workshop was that "love" is not a verb. Master does not "love" us. He is Love, and what we receive from him comes "out of Love" or "from Love." The way that we can find Love is through our spiritual practice: by doing the morning meditation, evening cleaning, nine-o'clock prayer, and bedtime prayer; by taking individual sittings and participating in group satsangh; by attending gatherings,

visiting Master, and developing constant remembrance.

By doing our practice with a sincere heart, by obeying the Master, and by receiving his guidance and his grace, we find our connection to our inner Master, the Love that is within all of us. That Love, which has always been there, just needs to be uncovered so that we can connect to it.

But making a connection to the Love within us is not enough. We must also make a connection between the Love within each of us and the Love within Master. And through Master's heart, and by his divine grace, we are able to make the final connection to the heart of the divine.

So, we are not looking to be loved. As Master has said, we are trying to become Love. By Master's divine grace, may we all be successful!

## SPURS Retreat

By Claudia Russell  
West Palm Beach, FL

It has been a month since we were all together in Molena for the National Gathering on Oct 11, 2009 and I still resonate as I listen to Master's video message to us. I can hear and feel his loving encouragement to "keep moving," and apply ourselves as we refine our practice. "He compared our spiritual path to a horse that, "first walks, then trots, canters, then gallops." Throughout the years he has given us many hints on how to mobilize ourselves and push ahead at the speed at which he knows we are capable of applying.

One such opportunity is SPURS Retreat Center in Austin, Texas. This summer I took the opportunity to visit SPURS for

the first time and I must share that this was a maturing spiritual experience for me. I feel that I've experienced more growth from this one visit than in all fifteen years of practice combined. I've always wondered about Master retreating in Satkhol and the benefit derived, and after my own retreat experience I got a glimpse of why he provided us these gifts in India and now in the USA. After my four days at SPURS this summer and after hearing Master's message it's very clear that these retreat centers are there to mobilize us or spur us on and forward into mature abhyasis. SPURS is a treasure and a spark in this dark world and I pray more and more abhyasis will utilize it as intended so we can gallop forward into the vision that Master has for us.

## My Visit to SPURS Retreat Center

By Jill Stallard-Sames, Caledonia, MI

*As soon as the waves have stopped, and the lake has become quiet, we see its bottom. So with the mind; when it is calm, we see what our own nature is; we do not mix ourselves but remain our own selves.*

– Commentary by Vivekananda on  
*The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali.*

It was very hot, almost "Chennai hot," when I passed through the entrance of the SPURS Retreat Center. I was greeted first by a flock of peafowl, who followed the shuttle van down to the ranch house, and then by the SPURS caretakers, Tom and Mary Lou Stoner. A familiar feeling, reminiscent of Manapakkam, surged up within me: *I am home.*

I spent the first three days in silence, weaning myself from all outside distractions – family and work responsibilities, telephones, television, computers, and reading. It was difficult to let go of my need for a to-do list, to give up the idea, *I do, therefore I am worthy*, and embrace the idea, *I am, and in this pure inner essence lies my worth*. But as I tried my best to cooperate with the process, I found, even on that first day, that my very soul was rejoicing. As the hundreds of demands on my attention slowly slipped away my soul could breathe! It

breathed in the sanctity of this place, so saturated with Master's transmission.

My meditations were of a very different quality. I was very clearly aware that all the elements of my being were connected and working together as they were designed to. My mind relaxed and let go. My heart could *feel* and was very open. Master was in the driver's seat. The meditations left me with a sense of love for Master, purity, and peace that was profound and unforgettable.

This week brought an understanding of the value of making a retreat. What I found within myself was like the bottom of the lake. I could not find the bottom so long as I was wound up so tightly by the busyness of life. Everything that kept my mind going was making wave after wave on the surface of the lake. I had to retreat in order to let go and see the bottom.

I am so grateful that we have the SPURS Retreat Center. I can see how it is yet another very important tool for our growth that Master has so lovingly provided for us. I know that I will be back.

## North America UN Activities Working Group

On November 20, 2009, SRCM centers and abhyasis across North America organized and participated in informational and prayer events commemorating United Nations Universal Children's Day. We hope that many of you were able to participate and we look forward to hearing from you about the creative and inspiring events that took place.

While there are dozens of UN days, it is suggested that in North America we collectively commemorate six UN days in 2010.

- 21 March - International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
- 15 May - International Day of Families
- 12 August - International Youth Day
- 21 September - International Day of Peace
- 16 November - International Day for Tolerance
- 10 December - Human Rights Day

No center is required to hold prayer events on all of these dates. This is a simple invitation to participate, based on the idea that many people praying is a good thing, and we can serve our communities by offering everyone an opportunity to pray for all.

For further information, you are welcome to contact Amy Mody, [amymody@yahoo.com](mailto:amymody@yahoo.com).



### Visit to Mexico City

By William Waycott, San Luis Obispo, CA

Representing the Shri Ram Chandra Mission, Br. Santosh Khanjee, Br. Miguel Álvarez, Sr. Martha Villaseñor and I joined representatives from many other non-government organizations (NGOs) from around the world to participate in this year's United Nations Department of Public Information (UNDPI) NGO international conference, held in Mexico City on the first week of September. The theme of the conference was nuclear disarmament, and the presentations focused on what each person can do to promote it.

At the opening session, we listened to talks given by several famous people, including U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and Nobel Peace Prize laureate Jody Williams. Both

### United Nations Conference for the Department of Public Information/ Non-Governmental Organizations

speakers gave impassioned talks containing horrifying information on the number of nuclear weapons in existence and on the insufficient oversight provided by the responsible governments.

In the evening we met Br. Vincent Willaerts, the prefect for the Mexico City area, and traveled to the local satsangh. It was held in a quiet place on the third floor of a building located in a residential area near the city center. More than 20 million people live in Mexico City, so the potential for development there is great once Sahaj Marg begins to take hold.

A link to news from the UNDPPI conference is available at <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs//2009/ngo682.doc.htm>.

## Here's what's new in the bookstore



The following new publications are now available for purchase at the Molena Bookstore.

Place your order online at <https://www.srcm.org/onlinebookstore//catalog.do?bookstore=USMOL1>.

### BOOKS:

Heart Speak 2008  
He the Wonder  
Commentary on The Ten Maxims of  
Sahaj Marg (Spanish translation)

### MP3 CDs:

He, the Hookah, & I (Hubble – Bubble)

### DVDs:

Character Formation -- Set of 8 DVDs  
Love is God  
Visions and Experiences  
Be With Him  
Fulfilling Nature's Purpose  
Appreciating in Yourself  
What Sahaj Marg Is  
Inner Tranquility Brings  
Peace Into The World  
The Eternal Connection  
Reverence, Respect, And  
Restraint (DVD SET – II)  
The Place of Education in Spirituality  
Hubble Bubble -- Set of 5 DVDs  
(He, The Hookah & I, Part 2)  
DVD Set July 2008

## Is there an Echo in your mailbox?

Not getting your Sahaj Marg news in a timely manner? You can now subscribe online to have the **Echoes of North America** quarterly newsletter delivered directly to your inbox. Go to <http://www.sahajmarg.org/newsletters/north-america> to register and to read past editions.

While you're at it, take a few moments to familiarize yourself with the many sources of news and information available on our beautiful new Sahaj Marg website: <http://www.sahajmarg.org>.

The site is nearly complete and serves as a wonderful resource for abhyasis and for anyone wishing to learn more about Sahaj Marg meditation.

And don't forget to start your day with a **Daily Reflection**. Register online to receive a reflection a day: <http://www.sahajmarg.org/daily-reflections>.

## New and/or relocated prefects

Upender Nazir

Edina, MN

[kaul\\_us@yahoo.com](mailto:kaul_us@yahoo.com)



*This heart is the seat of the soul, the very essence of the being in his frantic quest towards transcendence.*

*Heart Speak 2004, vol. 2, p. 107 – Rev. Chariji*

## Calendar of Events: December 2009, January & February 2010

DATE	WHERE	EVENT	CONTACT
Dec 5-6	Baltimore, MD	Regional Gathering	<a href="mailto:desikanh@yahoo.com">desikanh@yahoo.com</a>
Dec 6	Indianapolis, IN	Extended Day	<a href="mailto:bob@connorpainting.com">bob@connorpainting.com</a>
Dec 12-13	Dayton Ashram, Beaver creek, OH	Regional Gathering	<a href="mailto:vchitkara@sbcglobal.net">vchitkara@sbcglobal.net</a>
Dec 13	Cleveland Center, Cleveland, OH	Extended Day	<a href="mailto:ddeani@aol.com">ddeani@aol.com</a>
Dec 20	Warrenville Center, Chicago, IL	Day Long	<a href="mailto:ragavr@gmail.com">ragavr@gmail.com</a>
Dec 27	Milwaukee, WI	Extended Day	<a href="mailto:dhineshd@hotmail.com">dhineshd@hotmail.com</a>
Dec 31- Jan 1	Warrenville Center, Chicago, IL	New Year's Weekend Gathering	<a href="mailto:ragavr@gmail.com">ragavr@gmail.com</a>
Dec 31 - Jan 3	Molena Ashram, Molena, GA	New Year's Weekend Gathering	<a href="mailto:molena@srcm.org">molena@srcm.org</a>
Jan 1	Cupertino, CA	New Year's Celebration Day	<a href="mailto:rortalisetti@yahoo.com">rortalisetti@yahoo.com</a>
Jan 1-2	Sunderland Ashram, MA	New Year's Regional Gathering	<a href="mailto:colleensackheim@yahoo.com">colleensackheim@yahoo.com</a>
Jan 3	Indianapolis, IN	Extended Day	<a href="mailto:bob@connorpainting.com">bob@connorpainting.com</a>
Jan 10	Dayton Ashram, Beaver creek, OH	Extended Day	<a href="mailto:vchitkara@sbcglobal.net">vchitkara@sbcglobal.net</a>
Jan 10	Cleveland Center, Cleveland, OH	Day Long	<a href="mailto:ddeani@aol.com">ddeani@aol.com</a>
Jan 10	Shrewsbury, MO	Extended Day	<a href="mailto:william.biddle@sbcglobal.net">william.biddle@sbcglobal.net</a>
Jan 16	Victoria Centre, British Columbia	All Day Regional Gathering	<a href="mailto:judithp57@gmail.com">judithp57@gmail.com</a>
Jan 17	Warrenville Center, Chicago, IL	Day Long	<a href="mailto:ragavr@gmail.com">ragavr@gmail.com</a>
Jan 17	Hurricane, WV	Extended Day	<a href="mailto:ragavr@gmail.com">ragavr@gmail.com</a>
Jan 24	Milwaukee, WI	Day Long	<a href="mailto:dhineshd@hotmail.com">dhineshd@hotmail.com</a>
Jan 24	Richmond, IN	Extended Day	<a href="mailto:richmond.meditates@gmail.com">richmond.meditates@gmail.com</a>
Jan 28	Milwaukee, WI	Day Long	<a href="mailto:ragavr@gmail.com">ragavr@gmail.com</a>
Jan 31	Cupertino, CA	Lalaji Maharaj Birth Anniversary	<a href="mailto:rortalisetti@yahoo.com">rortalisetti@yahoo.com</a>
Feb 1-2	Sunderland Ashram, MA	Lalaji Maharaj Birth Anniversary	<a href="mailto:colleensackheim@yahoo.com">colleensackheim@yahoo.com</a>
Feb 2	Molena Ashram, Molena, GA	Lalaji Maharaj Birth Anniversary	<a href="mailto:molena@srcm.org">molena@srcm.org</a>
Feb 2	Shrewsbury, MO	Lalaji Maharaj Birth Anniversary	<a href="mailto:william.biddle@sbcglobal.net">william.biddle@sbcglobal.net</a>
Feb 7	Indianapolis, IN	Extended Day	<a href="mailto:bob@connorpainting.com">bob@connorpainting.com</a>
Feb 10	Baltimore, MD	Regional Gathering	<a href="mailto:desikanh@yahoo.com">desikanh@yahoo.com</a>
Feb 14	Dayton Ashram, Beaver creek, OH	Extended Day	<a href="mailto:vchitkara@sbcglobal.net">vchitkara@sbcglobal.net</a>
Feb 21	Warrenville Center, Chicago, IL	Day Long	<a href="mailto:ragavr@gmail.com">ragavr@gmail.com</a>
Feb 28	Milwaukee, WI	Day Long Gathering	<a href="mailto:dhineshd@hotmail.com">dhineshd@hotmail.com</a>
Feb 28	Hurricane, WV	Extended Day	<a href="mailto:ragavr@gmail.com">ragavr@gmail.com</a>

## Submissions for Constant Remembrance

**Constant Remembrance** is the global spiritual quarterly magazine of the Shri Ram Chandra Mission. This full color periodical is produced by an international team and distributed worldwide in January, April, July, and October.

Your heartfelt insights on spirituality as gained from the practice of Sahaj Marg are welcomed. Please send contributions as an attachment using MS Word to [cr@srcm.org](mailto:cr@srcm.org). Include your full name and centre/country.

To subscribe to Constant Remembrance (annual or life), go to: [www.srcm.org/onlinebookstore/subscriptionForm.do](http://www.srcm.org/onlinebookstore/subscriptionForm.do)

Themes for upcoming issues of Constant Remembrance as follows:

Issue Date	Theme	Deadline
April 2010	Acceptance	February 1, 2010
July 2010	Simplicity	May 1, 2010
October 2010	Tolerance	August 1, 2010

### 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. We need your contributions! Please send **short (200–300 words)** articles and photographs on your upcoming or recent gatherings, trips with Master, and visits to ashrams or retreat centers. Photos should be submitted separately, not embedded in articles, and without labels or embellishment. While we cannot use everything that is sent to us, we will do our best possible to make sure the entire North America 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).

For inclusion in the March 2010 newsletter, please send submissions by February 15, 2010 to: [EchoesNA@sahajmarg.org](mailto:EchoesNA@sahajmarg.org).

Editors: [janmariec@comcast.net](mailto:janmariec@comcast.net), [barbarajeanne11@gmail.com](mailto:barbarajeanne11@gmail.com)  
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Master's news: Transcription by Diana Waycott

Contact: [EchoesNA@sahajmarg.org](mailto:EchoesNA@sahajmarg.org)

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