



## Our Lives Are His Message

Dear Readers,  
Sai Ram

It was with honour and trepidation that I commenced my position as National Chair on January 14<sup>th</sup>. I have already publicly thanked Shobhna, my predecessor. She dedicatedly, imaginatively and thoughtfully served the Organisation for the past two years as National Chair and implemented some great systems and innovations during that time.

As a 'Baptism of Fire', five days after my taking office, the SSSSO UK hosted one of the largest international Sai Organisation meetings possibly to have ever been convened outside India: The 'Regional European Consultation on Sathya Sai Education'. (Please see the feature article.) It was large in terms of the number of countries that were represented in one place! It was a good opportunity for some of us Council members to begin to work together for the first time in our new roles.

Eight days after that, my role took me to an amazing Spiritual day in Region 6 (written up further on). It focused on two major poets of the Sufi tradition and was a real delight to experience! Just six days ago our National Office Bearers' Conference took place (featured further on). It seemed filled with creative positivity, promise and the spirit of us all being at one and 'in the right place at the right time'. A great sense of unity and love prevailed.

Each Region will follow this up with their very own Regional Office Bearers' Conferences on February 25<sup>th</sup> to spread the energy and content of our National meeting as far as possible. Your Centre Chair/Regional Chair have details of these.

Your newly composed Central Council endeavours to serve you in every way that it can, to deepen Swami's message and bring it into manifestation through all our lives.

As you may have noticed 'Love and Light' is two years old this month! It is a very appropriately titled newsletter and the name should always remind us of Swami's words:

*'When the entire creation in and around him becomes a blissful love and light-emitting experience, then the Sadhaka (spiritual aspirant) loses the limited consciousness of his individual entity, transcends the peripheries of personality to experience at all times through all his senses the Blissful Immanent Divinity which was always latent in himself.'*

Then our lives truly will be His message!

Love and Light  
Rosemary Perry, National Chair

## Remembrance... Marilyn Feldberg

Any devotee who was involved with the development of ISAP (Inner Self Awareness Programme) or SSEHV will be sad to hear of the loss of Marilyn Feldberg on January 19<sup>th</sup>.

Marilyn first became involved in the Sai organisation in 1987 through ISAP. She brought her wealth of experience as a Psychosynthesis teacher and also her great personal qualities of warmth, enthusiasm, faith and dedication to the workshops where ISAP was being developed. Later, she taught at several ISAP weekend workshops, including two at Ashford and one on the Isle of Wight.

Later, Marilyn visited Swami at Prashanti and began to help Carole Alderman with SSEHV training, assisting Carole in 1998 at the first SSEHV weekend in Dublin and contributing valuable material to the SSEHV programme.

What many devotees did not realise is that Marilyn already had an organisation of her own, an educational charity for youth called WYSE (World Youth Service Enterprise), which she had founded in 1987 after having a vision of peace in the world through bringing spiritual and leadership training to young people.

Through her dedication, hard work, networking and perseverance, and along with bringing up her own children, Paul and Elena, Marilyn developed WYSE until today it has branches all over the world and is associated with the UN.

Which makes it even more remarkable that she gave so much to ISAP and SSEHV. Wherever the 'work' was going on, she was there.

Marilyn will be remembered for her exuberance, sense of fun, her beautiful singing voice, her dignity and generosity, above all, her extraordinary gift for bringing out the best in people.

She will be greatly missed, but her inspiration will live on in many hearts. Our deepest sympathies go to Paul, Elena and Marilyn's family in America.

**Sandra Levy, Co-founder of ISAP**

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**Sathya Sai Bookshop**

The bookshop has a **NEW WEBSITE**

Please find it at:

**[www.srisathyasaibookcentre.org.uk](http://www.srisathyasaibookcentre.org.uk)**

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## Retiring and New Office Bearers

Welcome to all you new Office Bearers throughout the United Kingdom! Thanks go, too, to all of you who are continuing in your posts. With your help this Organisation provides so much that is good and wholesome both for ourselves and for others in this world.

*'All are servants. God is the only master.'*

The following are the current 2007 Central Council Members:

Regional Chairs:

Raj Rajasingam (R1), Satish Melwani (R2), Sunthar Uthayanan (R3), Ramesh Mistry (R4), Yogesh Solanki (R5), Philippa Malcomson (R6), Jey Sivaloganathan (R7) and Ram Konar (R8 – Acting Chair).

National Coordinators:

Sharmila Parikh (SSE), Prabodh Mistry (Sathya Sai Schools), Bharat Handa (Service), Raj Selvakumar (Spiritual), Carole Alderman (BISSE), Kishor Kumar (Secretary) and Shitu Chudasama (Vice-Chair).

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## Region 2

### Observing Maha Shivaratri

Region 2, with Prayers and Devotional Singing in South Oxhey, will celebrate the festival of Maha Shivaratri on Friday 16th February from 6pm to 6am on Sat 17th February. For further information, please contact:

**Senthil: 07984 792 105 or**

**Gayatri: 07984 792 109**

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## Region 3

### 'Your Life Is My Message'

On Sunday 25th February, at Christchurch Primary School, Balfour Road, Ilford, IG1 4LQ from 10am to 4pm, R3 holds its Regional Office Bearers' Conference within a Spiritually uplifting day.

The aim of the Regional meeting is to disseminate information from the National Office Bearers' Conference, through presentations and to motivate active workers within the Organisation to contribute further to our Region, Centres, chosen Wings (Youth, Spiritual, Education and Service), the Organisation and the community as a whole.

Our guest speaker, Mr Partishkumar, a former student of Sri Sathya Sai Baba's colleges, will no doubt inspire those attending to continue working actively within the Sai Organisation and to be exemplars of Swami's teachings and truly let their lives be His message.

**Sunthar Uthayanan, Chair Region 3**

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## Region 4

Regional CRB application processing will take place on 18th February in two locations: Coventry and Leicester. We are aiming to process approximately 200 applications on the day. Bharat Handa, Sharmila Parikh and Mukund Patel are attending to oversee and officially countersign the documents.

On 25th February we have **RYC and ROBC** taking place on same day in Broadway School, Perry Barr, Birmingham. Some UKCC members will be attending and some Region 5 Youth have indicated that they would like to take part in the RYC.

**Ramesh Mistry, Chair Region 4**

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## 'Dynamic Parenting' at R3 SSE School

The parents and teachers from Region 3 were very privileged to host Dr Pal Dhall and his lovely wife Dr Tehseen Dhall as their guest speakers, at the Region 3 SSE School, on Saturday 27th January. Dr Pal Dhall is a surgeon by profession, an academic, Zone 3 Chairperson; and both he and his wife are Directors of the Australian Institute of Sathya Sai Education.

The book 'Human Values: The Heart of Dynamic Parenting Based on the Teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba' by Drs Pal and Tehseen Dhall and their subsequent book on Parenting Workshops are renowned within the organisation and used widely in Sathya Sai Parenting Study circles.

Along with other eminent educationalists Dr Pal Dhall is on the International Education Committee that comes under the banner of the Sri Sathya Sai World Foundation.

Dr Dhall explored the role of the teacher and parent in the educating of human values in children growing up in modern society. In considering the tripartite (parent, child and teacher) approach it is important to note that parents are a child's primary teacher and in turn the teacher needs to adopt a parent's role with the child. Of the three types of teachers: the 'complaining', 'explaining' and the 'inspiring', it is essential that parents and teachers adopt the 'inspiring' style. Of the three styles of parenting: 'permissive', 'authoritarian' and 'authoritative', it is the 'authoritative' style that tends to be most successful. In authoritative parenting there are shared bonds of affection, culture, values and tradition passed onto the children.

He expounded on the fact that children's attitudes, skills, values and behaviour are determined by two institutions: family and school. Teachers and parents construct children's imagination, their values, their power of discrimination and so forth.

He explored parental concerns, fears and desired qualities of children and enlightened the audience with reference to the 8.5 multiple intelligences all are born with; these are Logical/Mathematical, Linguistic, Spatial, Kinaesthetic, Intrapersonal, Interpersonal, Musical, Naturalistic and (the 0.5) Spiritual! These multiple intelligences can be related to the 5 teaching techniques used in Sai Spiritual Education and in Education in Human Values, namely: Quotations – linguistic; Story Telling – Kinaesthetic, linguistic, interpersonal; Silent Sitting – Intrapersonal; Singing – Musical/Kinaesthetic; Group Activity – Interpersonal, Kinaesthetic, naturalistic.

Dr Dhall summed up by saying that in order for parents to communicate values to children and be their 'primary' teacher they must lead and live by example, imparting human values by not only following the dictum 'be, do and tell' but also 'be, do and ask'. Quality family time is all-important as in the old, ever true, adage, 'The family that prays, eats and plays together stays together'. Parents need to provide appropriate religious and cultural experiences and convey expectations to children that are realistic, natural and within the child's capabilities.

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A parent's and a teacher's attitude towards a child should be to recognise the divine being within the child. The child is giving the parent and teacher an opportunity to serve and in turn cultivate their personality and character. Parents and teachers alike were very appreciative of the wonderful two-hour session they experienced with Dr Dhall leaving them inspired to inspire!

**Lakshmi Puvanendran,  
Region 3 SSE School Coordinator**

## **Region 6**

### **'Fly towards a Secret Sky'**

#### **A celebration of the lives of Rumi and Kabir**

This was a day organised by the Region 6 Spiritual Co-ordinator, Bahnoon Agnew, and coincided with the 800-year commemoration of Jalaluddin Rumi, the Sufi mystic. The hall, altar and tables were decorated with flowers of white, yellow and blue some of the participants were suitably attired in Middle Eastern dress, the scene was set. The day started with the Azan (call to prayer) 3 Oms, Vedic chanting and Al-Fatiha (the opening verse of the Quran condensed into seven lines). Rosemary Perry, the UK Chair spoke of the lives of Rumi and Kabir, their accomplishments and poems and linked them to Shirdi Sai, who was also recognised by both Moslem and Hindu followers. Duncan MacKintosh, the Founder of the Rose Theatre, then recited some of Rumi's poems, simple, down to earth, funny and timeless. Some of the Sai Youth sang Q'awali songs, for the first time since singing them to our beloved Swami at Prashanti and our hearts skipped a beat! Omar Inayat Khan (grandson of the great Sufi Per Inayat Khan) then led us into a musical singing '*Dzikr*' (meditation) leaving our minds behind. Dr Mahesh Narayan inspired us with his love of Kabir, quoting poems and urging us to yearn ever more for the qualities of God. A fantastic Middle Eastern lunch was served to everyone by table angels, and in the afternoon a power point presentation about Kabir by Arun Bedhi was shown. Then more delights of Rumi letting us 'fly towards a secret sky' backed with exquisite devotional ragas played by Mohan and Ugen Padiachey. The sweet strains of Bhajans completed a day of wonder and inspiration.

**Philippa Malcomson, Region 6 Chair**

## **Region 8**

### **Sai service at Dungavel Immigration Removal Centre**

One of the staff at the Dungavel House Immigration Removal Centre, was looking for a Tamil-speaking person who was ready to offer his time to talk to some of the Sri Lankan detainees under his custody at Dungavel House. He first approached the Hindu Mandir at La Belle Place, Glasgow. As most of the people frequenting the temple were not Tamil speakers, he was directed to the trustees of the South Indian temple at Partick in Glasgow from whence he was directed to me.

#### **First visit to the detention centre**

He called me for the first time on 20th of December 2006 and requested me to come immediately to speak with these detainees. He also kindly offered to drive me back and forth to save

me time and energy. Dungavel House is a former prison, which has since been converted to be a removal centre. It is situated about an hour's drive from Glasgow. It still holds the energy and environment of a prison. I was led through several doors after intense security checks. A member of staff took me to a multi-faith prayer room, where some of the Sri Lankan detainees were waiting. There were seven of them including one couple. After introducing me to everyone I was asked to speak with them in private and told by the staff member he would pop in again in an hour's time.

I first introduced myself to everyone. At first, only one or two were actively communicating with me, but after 15 minutes, everyone started to pour out their sad stories about how they ended up there. It was quite shocking to discover that some of them had been there from four to nine months. They had not been able to communicate with, or even see, an outsider for these many months although they are allowed to receive calls any time from their families back home. After almost forty minutes of speaking to them, I realised that it might be a good idea to make a quick list of what they wanted from me (if I was allowed to bring something) next time. I started making a list and to my surprise they all ended up asking only for vibuthi, kum kum, chandan, sacred threads, idols and pictures of God. In fact I told them I would bring some Tamil movie DVDs and audio CDs. However nobody seemed to show any interest in food, garments or DVDs. The essence of their conversation conveyed only one meaning, "We all need the love of God, our lives cannot transform without God's intervention. So, please try to do a little Pooja (sacred ritual) for us in one of the temples".

This really touched me. By this time, an hour had passed and a member of staff knocked and came inside. He told me it was time for us to go. I said goodbye to everyone and left the room with the list. Inspired by the first session he told me "We should do some work together". I suggested that the quickest thing that we could do before the New Year was to organise a 'bhajan session'. He immediately accepted that idea and told me that he would get permission from his higher authorities and get back to me. The next day he called me and confirmed the date as New Year's Day between 1 pm and 3 pm, allowing us to do one hour of devotional singing and another hour of conversing with the detainees.

Twelve of us went to the detention centre on New Year's Day. This being our first activity at the detention centre, each of the singers had thoroughly practised their bhajans. We sang a mix of mostly multi-faith bhajans in Tamil, Hindi and English. There was not a big turnout for the bhajans among the detainees. Most of them came in midway through the bhajans and sat for one or two bhajans. Some other detainees stayed on and tried to follow the bhajans (using the printed out song sheets). Some started dancing during the Shiva and multi-faith songs. At the end of the bhajans, Swami's vibuthi Prasadam was distributed. There was a vibrant energy in the hall where we did our songs and it gave us an immense

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satisfaction to feel Swami's presence. The detention centre offered us some snacks and drinks. We spent almost an hour conversing with the detainees. All the detainees enjoyed their time with us. One of them (from Ghana) said, "How nice it is to know that there are people who are willing to spend their New Year holiday with us"... We all went back with a feeling that we had made Swami happy for the day and had begun the New Year doing Swami's work. After this event, two weeks later we were requested to come in again.

**Anand Krishnan, Region 8 Youth Coordinator**

### **'NOBC 2007'**

National Office Bearers' Conference

### **Another year, another exciting Conference'!**

Held at Stanmore, Middlesex on the 3rd February, this conference was honoured by the presence of our wonderful Zone 9 Chair, Mr Kishin Khubchandani, who lit the lamp at the start of the conference.

What characterised this NOBC, for me personally was the tangible feeling of spirit, which imbued the day. Spirituality does not have to be heavy – Swami is always telling us to, "Be happy".

Yes, business was done; the review of 2006 activities (which included the PowerPoint presentation and the Regional Chairs' reports), but the deceptive lightness of the rest of the proceedings fed the heart. This was truly aided and abetted by Jey Sivaloganathan's wonderful compering, relaxed demeanour and witty links.

Rosemary Perry, the new National Chair, gave a comprehensive review of the Organisation in the UK, including the forthcoming steady formation, on firm foundations, of the new Ladies Wing. She touched on the personal side by urging us to recognise that we are all volunteers and we should recognise this and nurture each other. And gave some indication of what the next two years will bring. Retiring Council Members were each presented with a gift of appreciation for their contribution to the Organisation and the incoming Officers were introduced to the hall.

Then Kishin Khubchandani addressed us, talking with wisdom and insight on matters, which affect us in the UK. He also spoke lovingly about Swami.

Following came presentations relating to Sathya Sai Education. Our Central Co-ordinator, Ishver Patel, gave a review of the Regional (world 'Regions' in this context) European Education Conference held in Basingstoke. Carole Alderman (BISSE) spoke about a roadmap for the UK; Sharmila Parikh (National SSE Co-ordinator) addressed SSE matters and Prabodh Mistry (Schools Representative) spoke about the two Sathya Sai Schools.

Interspersed throughout the day were breaks, which allowed us to visit the bookshop, meet old friends and colleagues and be lovingly served with food and drinks (thanks to all of you).

Bharat Handa (National Service Co-ordinator) presented a paper from the International Medical Committee relating to the Doctors' Rota at the General Hospital at Prashanti. The morning session ended, somewhat differently, with Rosemary Perry

narrating 'A Walk in the Forest' an archetypal journey (accompanied by PowerPoint slides). This was written and created by Sandra Levy and first presented at National Ladies Day on 14th October 2006. It brought together a lot of insights supported by Swami's teachings and some lovely imagery.

A 'Q & A Session' followed lunch, ably and very wittily moderated by Shitu Chudasama (the new UK Vice-chair) with a panel comprising the National Wing Co-ordinators, BISSE and the Sathya Sai Schools' Representative. The proceedings were kept light (extremely humorous in places) whilst still presenting the panel with some hard questions written and handed in by the attendees.

The UK is heavily involved in the planning of the forthcoming World Youth Conference, to be held in Prashanti in July this year. Mathan Arulvel (new National Youth Co-ordinator) gave some background to this conference.

Having already mentioned the breaks throughout the day, the afternoon gave a special opportunity for Regional Wing Coordinators to have 'Afternoon Tea' with the Central Coordinator, and for Centre and Group Chairs to have 'Afternoon Tea' with the new National Chair.

Ishver Patel gave the Keynote Address 'Your Life is My Message'. He, as always, impressed me with his inspiration and wisdom. By using a very creative PowerPoint presentation he guided us through Swami's life, noting each significant event and achievement in the Avatar's steady, unfolding Mission. He challenged us to compare our lives at various ages with that of Swami at that age! All of us must have marvelled, yet again, at the enormity and variety of the projects established by the determination and devotion of Swami's followers. Always serene and unruffled, exuding love, Swami engenders in his followers this overwhelming yearning to serve humanity.

Philippa Malcomson (Chair, Region 6) gave a vote of thanks from us all. A huge thank you to the Planning Committee and ALL those who made this day appear effortless.

I was unprepared for the uplifting format of the concluding devotional singing! I was bowled over by the wonderful energy this imparted to me. Well done to the musicians and singers!

If you're an Office Bearer and/or Active Worker, you need to be there next year!

**Editor**

### **Sathya Sai Schools Best Practice Education**

Last month, January 2007, our Sathya Sai School St Andrews was declared as offering 'best practice education' in Fife. As a result the Scottish inspection body 'Equate' has requested to spend time with the school to observe and understand what we do. Several Equate mentors will be spending time at the school. This is a great credit to the management of the school as well as the leadership shown by Lesley-Ann Patrick, the head teacher.

**Prabodh Mistry,  
Sathya Schools Representative**

**SPECIAL FEATURE**

**European Regional Consultation on Sathya Sai Education, 19th – 21st January 2007**

This European conference was the first of five Regional Conferences planned for Europe, North America, Latin America, Africa and Asia. These worldwide conferences will provide the basis for creating a Sri Sathya Sai Education Plan that will be offered to Swami at a possible World Education Conference in November this year. It was an honour for the United Kingdom to be chosen as the first country to host such an event in the forthcoming series. A lovely hotel in Basingstoke, Berkshire, was chosen as the venue. Our Central Coordinator, Ishver Patel, was the main Conference organiser. He initially appointed a Planning Group for it, comprising Shobhna Patel (National Chair 2005/2006), Rosemary Perry (current National Chair), Sharmila Parikh (SSE), Prabodh Mistry (SS Schools), Carole Alderman (BISSE) and Bharat Handa (National Service Coordinator). Shitu Chudasama (National Vice Chair), as Secretary to the forthcoming World Youth Conference, was requested to attend by the SSS World Foundation. Mathan Arulvel, our National Youth Coordinator, attended as part of that and also as part of SITA (Sathya Sai Information Technology and the Arts) along with Kiran Mistry and Sean O'Sullivan. Other Council members attended in educational capacities. There were over two hundred delegates attending from around forty-four countries. (Some in an observing capacity.) Ms Alida Parkes, Dr Thorbjørn Meyer, Mr Steen Piculell and Mr Kishin Khubchandani, the Chairs of Zones 6, 7, 8 and 9 respectively, were present, as were Dr Goldstein (Chair, Sri Sathya Sai World Foundation), Dr Narendra Reddy (Director, SSSWF), Mr Bill Harvey and the entire Education Committee under Mr Kalyan Ray its Chair. Our three UK Sathya Sai Educational strands (SSE, BISSE and SS Schools) under the leadership of Sharmila, Carole and Prabodh represented their areas well for the SSSSO UK.

Great ongoing transformations and synthesis will proceed from this weekend contributing greatly to clarity and harmony of thought word and deed in every aspect of Sri Sathya Sai Education. The Hotel accommodated us very well and the staff elicited overwhelming and justified praise from the delegates for their kind attentiveness. The vegetarian food was much enjoyed. On Saturday morning Ishver set the scene regarding arrangements. Then our own Zone 9 Chair, Mr Kishin Khubchandani, gave the official 'Welcome' with loving warmth and care. There was a powerful inaugural address by Dr Goldstein that was eloquent, insightful and very inspiring. Other significant dignitaries rendered equally powerful and moving addresses: Dr Narendra Reddy and Mr Kalyan Ray. There was a presentation on the ESSE Institute (Europe) and the geographical and educational areas it covers, by Dr Thorbjørn Meyer and by Carole, BISSE, and Ishver on what Sathya Sai Education has accomplished in the UK. The first morning session closed with a very strong scene-setting speech by Mr Kalyan Ray. All the talks were powerful and oriented around love as the core of all that we do.

In the second session of the morning and after lunch there were five 'Thematic Working Groups', each on a different subject pertaining to the three educational strands, these were later followed by Zone Workshop meetings for: Zone 6, Zones 7 & 8 (combined) and Zone 9. Until about 1am, reports were drawn together evaluated and crystallised into key points for the next day's PPT presentations. In good collaboration and with additional help from Mathan Arulvel, the key UK educationists turned around handwritten information and converted it into a superb IT presentations in superfast time as, indeed, did the other Zones. On Sunday morning our Central Coordinator, Ishver Patel, did introductions etc. The four Zonal Chairs gave feedback on the suggestions that arose from the previous day's discussions in Groups and Workshops. There were immediate common themes that were evident. During his report, Chair for Zone 9, Mr Kishin Khubchandani, presented an engraved silver plate to (a very surprised!) Robert Alderman for all his work as Chair of the UK SSEHV Trust. Dr Goldstein kindly gave everyone an opportunity to pose questions by taking a 'Q & A Session'. He also gave a closing address in which he honoured Dr Art-Ong Jumsai, Dr Thorbjørn Meyer and Mr Victor Kanu for their hard work, extensive travel and efforts put in, to create the Sathya Sai Educational Institutes of Thailand, Europe and Africa. Each of these received an incredible ovation from the audience. Mr Bill Harvey also from the SSSWF addressed us, speaking in an uplifting way on love and our essential divinity - and on being happy! And so, too, did Mr Kalyan Ray in a very inspiring and loving talk. Ms Ronne Marantz from the Education Committee movingly concluded the conference and gave the vote of thanks ending with the Prayer of St Francis of Assisi.

Bharat Handa is to be particularly congratulated for masterminding a coach arrival and departure collection system that must rival with some of history's great manoeuvres! An extensive team of good-hearted people gave up whatever they might have otherwise been doing on Friday the 19th to wait all day at four London airports to welcome incoming delegates with refreshments and give them guidance to their collection points. There were seven stages of collection undertaken by five coaches on Friday that moved about one hundred incoming delegates - all arriving at different times, at different airports and different terminals etc! Many, many, delegates told me how very moved they were by the loving greeting they received at the airports. Kiran and Sean from SITA smoothly, professionally, unobtrusively and efficiently recorded all the talks and main Conference proceedings. On behalf of the SSSSO UK I should like to thank all the delegates who attended for travelling so far from all over the world and bringing such tangible love with them to create the success we all experienced.

**Rosemary Perry,  
National Chair**