



9th June 2008

The 'Ongoing' Feeding of the 45,000!
Dear Readers, Sai Ram!

When this issue comes out I will be (hopefully) sunning myself in Greece! ("Well", as they say, "somebody's got to do it"!) Over the past month I've had some interesting experiences. On Sunday the 18th May I met with members of the National Youth Coordinating Committee for an informal session with them. Ishver Patel also came and it was very fruitful and inspiring to be exchanging views, thoughts and answering some challenging questions and expressing honest opinions.

Something that bugs many people in our Organisation is 'doing reports'! This is something the Youth raised and I hear it from all kinds of office bearers. Certainly I found the reporting quite hard when I was a Regional Chair and I found the word 'ongoing' covered many of our situations! 'Protocol' comes up for scrutiny again and again, too. "Why do we have to go through these lines of protocol to invite so-and-so?" I hear. My answer to the protocol question is simply that for the word 'protocol' substitute 'good manners'. It is courtesy to inform, liaise and embrace others into arrangements. There is nothing more embarrassing as a National Chair than to find out that an esteemed visitor from abroad is coming by informal invitation to the United Kingdom and will be speaking at a Centre! It doesn't look as if we know what we are doing. Reports do all add up to something substantial and this is relayed to Prashanti. Reports help assess where we are at, what the trends are and enable us to evaluate what it is that we are successful at. I told you last month that an exercise in dealing with media questions was superbly handled by Council Members at one of our meetings in April. At that same meeting I urged that we do quantify our activities more. It is my belief that you need to know more about what this Organisation actually achieves. This helps you describe our Organisation to others better and demonstrates more fully the kind of selfless acts of service that take place in the name of our beloved Teacher and Avatar, Sathya Sai Baba.

For some time I've wanted to know just how many individual meals are provided for the homeless by the SSSSO UK each year. Well, yesterday we found out ...finally! What do you think the number is? 5,000? 10,000? Wrong! I am now able to tell you that the Service Wing of our Organisation serves in the region of 45,000 meals to the homeless each year! This is a great achievement! Well done to all of you who take part in this important social service! Over the coming months I hope to be able to let you know other important facts about what we achieve.

Far from this being about 'blowing our trumpet' I see this kind of information as being positive, uplifting and inspirational! Hopefully each individual component of this massive service activity will now realise that it is contributing to a vast and much bigger achievement. As my grandmother used to say, "Many a mickle makes a muckle!" (I know – I don't know what a 'mickle' or a 'muckle' is ...but you get the idea!)

On the 18th May too, I was privileged to attend, on behalf of the Organisation, a talk by Dada Jashan P Vaswani who is the spiritual leader of the Sadhu Vaswani Centre, UK. This organisation in conjunction with 'The Young Indian Vegetarians' hosted a programme at the Kadwa Patidar Centre, Kenton. Sadhu Vaswani inspiringly described various phases in mankind's social evolution over the last two hundred-or-so years and predicted that the next great evolution, after the emancipation of women, will be that in the 21st century the spiritual reasons for vegetarianism will be embraced and understood.

On May 24th I didn't have to travel too far from home to join the SSLTP 'outward bound weekend' in the Hampshire New Forest near Christchurch. I'm glad I didn't attend on the 25th as the candidates tested themselves by balancing and walking on ropes high up in the trees! However I did get to join one of the two teams at raft building and rafting race to a marker on the lake! I can honestly say that I haven't enjoyed myself so much for ages! How far does the responsibility of this Organisation reach into individual family life? It was raised yesterday, at our 2nd Quarterly

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Council Meeting, with much care and concern, that many teenagers are involved in what are generically known as 'social networking websites'. Do the parents of these teenage kids know that their children's photos and personal writings are sometimes not contained within 'secure' areas? There are degrees of privacy in these websites and often youngsters just set up their pages in areas 'open' to public view. Naturally, there are implications... Whilst we cannot as an Organisation wade in on this, I am raising in this column this matter as one parent to another as there may be parents who may not have realised the dangers and situation. It is easy for parents to feel that the technology is beyond them and that these kids know what they are doing. All of Council respectfully suggests that close scrutiny be paid to the nature of such website involvement by your children.

Love and Light,
Rosemary Perry, National Chair

National Sathya Sai Retreat:

"You Are Me, I am You,
We Are One"

22nd to the 24th of August

After a two-year gap, the national Sathya Sai Retreat will again take place this year. The planning group is putting the two days programme together. The invitation letter and the application forms have now all been circulated via Regional Chairs to all Centre and Group Chairs Centre/Group chairs please make sure this information is circulated to all members and please encourage them to attend. Hopefully next issue we can give you the names of all the speakers. The programme will include workshops and many other activities. It is going to be a very spiritually uplifting weekend, so do book early as there are only limited spaces. Joining instructions will be communicated nearer the time.

Ramesh Mistry for the
National Retreat Planning Team

SSE National Teachers' Day 2008

Important Notice

National Teachers' Day 2008 will now take place on Saturday 30th August 2008 at Winston Churchill Hall, Manor Farm Site, Pinn Way, Ruislip, Middlesex, HA4 7QL. Please note this revised date in your diaries. It will be a wonderful opportunity for Teachers, Teaching assistants, office bearers and all those involved in Sai Spiritual Education (SSE) to come together to celebrate, learn, share ideas and be inspired

for the next academic year. Further details and registration forms will be available via Regional SSE coordinators after 9th June.

Lakshimi Puvanendran,
National SSE Co-ordinator

Region 1

Easwaramma Day

On Monday 5th May 2008, Region 1 celebrated Easwaramma Day at an annual Regional Celebration held this year at Archbishop of Lanfranc School. Over 600 devotees congregated to celebrate the event which commenced with a March Past by the Region 1 SSE children, paying their respects and homage to Mother Easwaramma.

The program this year was extremely varied and began with Vedic Chanting, Multi-faith Prayers and Bhajans by Region 1 SSE children. Not only did the children sing, but also accompanied their singing with their own instruments.

Dramas, presentations, speeches and musical items were all performed by the Region 1 children. Lewisham, Kingston, Tooting, and Merton SSE students all performed dramas, depicting and highlighting key stories, with great meanings from the glories of Ganesha and his love for his mother, the three noble wishes of two mothers, and Guru and annihilation of attachment to the stories of Sage Agasthya. In addition, the values of truth and sacrifice were also shown in a drama entitled "The Truth Shall Set Us Free", whereby an Italian Priest is in the search for Truth and the drama shows the sacrifices made in order to achieve his goal. A Bromley SSE student gave a speech on the value of the mother.

Both Brixton and Wimbledon Sai Centres presented their experiences of SSE. Various SSE Groups in Brixton Sai Centre talked about their SSE experience, showed Sai Teachings through Science, conducted PowerPoint presentations on their Group 3 projects and also involved the audience in a demonstration on meditation and the benefits it has. This was then concluded by a Group 1 student telling a story that they have learnt about Gratitude and Respect. Wimbledon also showed their experience of SSE by presenting "Ocean of Samsara". They showed various teachings such as prayers, meditation and group devotional singing, ending with a Quiz in the style of "The Weakest Link".

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Following last years Easwamma Day, the Region 1 team decided to have Harmonium lessons for the SSE children of Region 1. For the last 9 months Amer-Bhai has been teaching Harmonium once a month at the Sai Mandir. In addition to this, he has incorporated a unique teaching style by having a website that the students can log onto and learn online. The audience were privileged to see and hear what the SSE Region 1 students have learnt in such a short space of time as they performed 2 musical items on the Harmonium.

An SSEHV video was then shown to the audience showing activities that occurred from 7th April to 10th April on a four day "Value Alive" at Park Hill Junior School in Croydon. 16 helpers and 50 children attended the "Value Alive" and the event was very successful. Great support was received from the school and Region 1 and they hope to run another programme this July. After the video, Ashwin aged 8 who attended the SSEHV 4 day event, sang 3 songs which he had learnt at "Value Alive" and accompanied these on his guitar.

The Guest Speaker was Brother Veeru, an Ex-Sai Student, who is often referred to as a double Sai graduate having both attended SSE and also having SSE held in his home during his childhood. Brother Veeru now working as a Surgeon in Cardiff gave an inspiring talk covering almost every topic, the main being the importance of SSE for today's children.

Region 1 decided to give gifts to their SSE children as a small token of appreciation for all their hard work, dedication and commitment in making the day extremely successful. Former National Chair and respected member of Region 1, Aunty Sivayogam was called to make the presentations to the SSE children.

The program concluded with Bhajans and Arathi, again led by Region 1 SSE children accompanied by their own instruments and Maha Prasadam served. Bhagawan's divine presence was truly felt by all those present.

Raj Rajasingam, Chair Region 1

Region 1
Liquid Love Sessions
The Need

Giving blood is an excellent form of Seva and also one of vital importance in the UK.

Every day the National Blood Service (NBS) aims to collect 8000 units of blood to ensure that patients across England and North Wales are able to receive the treatment they need. Red blood cells last for 35 days, after which the NBS needs to replenish their stocks to keep their supply healthy.

Currently only 5% of the eligible population are blood donors and a mere 3% of the NBS donor database are from ethnic minority communities. There is a great need for ethnic minorities to give blood as different ethnicities have different frequencies of blood types e.g. 25% of the South Asian population have blood type B compared to 10% of the overall UK population.

Swami Himself describes giving blood as sharing "Liquid Love"

The dates for the forthcoming Liquid Love sessions are scheduled for 2008:

- Sunday 22nd June
- Sunday 14th September
- Sunday 19th October
- Sunday 16th November

All sessions will be held at the Sai Mandir on Effra Road, Wimbledon.

If you have any additional questions on this service activity, then please do not hesitate to contact either Region-1 Seva coordinator Jana or Merton Seva coordinator Lavan.

The response of the NHS from the last session



Region 3

Bahá'í Festival of Ridván

On Saturday 26th April 2008, Manor Park Sai Centre, celebrated the Bahá'í festival of Ridván. The festival marks Bahá'u'lláh's time in the garden of Ridván in 1863 and his announcement that he was the prophet promised by the Báb. Bahá'u'lláh ordained this festival as the 'Most Great Festival'. Bahá'u'lláh renamed it Ridván, which means Paradise.

The altar was beautifully laid out with colours of purple, blue, orange and yellow as the background. The celebration of this extraordinary festival, commenced with Bahá'í meditative music before the group devotional songs started. Ria Radhika Singh, SSE Student who was our compere, gave us a small introduction about the festival. As explained earlier Ridván is the Arabic word for Paradise and considered the holiest and most significant of the Bahá'í Faith festivals. It lasts for 12 days and celebrates Bahá'u'lláh's declaration in Ridván, the name given to the Nabiiyyih garden in Baghdad. It was here that Bahá'u'lláh gathered with family and followers for twelve days from the 21st April to the 2nd May 1863 before being banished to Turkey by the authorities and eventually to Akka in Israel.

After the brief information, devotional songs commenced. The atmosphere was enthused with vibrations as each singer sang. Followed by this, a PowerPoint presentation was shown describing the basic philosophy of the Bahai' Faith and Ridván. After this Brother Anant Patel spoke about how we sometimes knowingly or unknowingly exclude people from our lives. This could be in the workplace, home, centre etc. He asked us to look at our own actions and see if we do this and change for the better. We may not agree with everyone but we can always agree to disagree cordially. He also spoke about Sri Sathya Sai Baba's teachings of Unity in Diversity and how they beautifully compliment the Bahá'í sense of belonging to one world community. Then there was a short role play where some children excluded one child to show how this can feel. It clearly showed how we do this and not realise the consequences. By reviewing our own behaviours we can improve. It is this that will then help us to improve all relationships, from our own families, to the community and the world at large.

There were two quotes, which really drew our attention:

See God in everyone you meet;

See God in everything you handle;

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Live together; Revere each other;
Let not the seeds of envy and hate grow and choke
The clear stream of love.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

The well-being of mankind, its peace and security, are unattainable unless and until its unity is firmly established.

Bahá'u'lláh

Our speaker Dr John Stuart Lester, the chair of the Interfaith Forum who has written a thesis on the Polish born English novelist, Joseph Conrad, called Conrad and Religion. He has been a Bahá'í since 1968 spoke about Bahá'u'lláh, his qualities, his experiences and how the faith developed over time. Then he went on to describe the Bahá'í philosophy and read two sections from the teachings of the prophet. Finally we finished with the waving of the lamp and refreshments a little bit wiser with regards to the Bahá'í Faith.

Written by Dakshini Mohan
(Submitted by Sunthar Uthayan,
Region 3 Chair)

Easwaramma Day

On 10th May 2008, Manor Park Sai Centre celebrated Easwaramma Day. Although the day brought an unseasonable temperature of 22 degree Celsius, the programme was filled with events that made us forget the heat.

The celebration started with Group Devotional Singing, which in true style for "Children's Day" was sung entirely by the Sai Spiritual Education (SSE) Students.

Throughout the programme we were entertained by the styling of SSE Student Prem Patel, who served as the compere. Prem, who was compering for the first time had moments that challenged him, however his inimitable smile was childlike in its sincerity that the crowd was enthralled with his methods adapting to the situation. It was felt by all that his willingness to help and his SSE experience will mould him to be an excellent future compere for major events.

After the Devotional Songs, a short PowerPoint presentation on the life of Easwaramma was shown. The presentation stood to remind us the inspiration that Easwaramma gave and her love as a mother.

The children then treated us with a musical performance consisting of Eastern classical Carnatic Singing and Western Classical Flute. Such young children, yet such divine music flowed from them! We were all enthralled by their performances.

To end off the programme, Sister Meera Visakan, one of the main organisers for the festival, an active youth and an ex SSE

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student, enlightened us with a strong yet jovial speech based on Swami's discourse on virtuous mothers. She spoke with vigour on the mother aspect and also drew some laughs from the crowd.

Finally to finish the day, a troupe of mothers and future mothers, served the attendees a delightful dish of fresh fruit salad topped with vanilla ice cream.

Overall it was a thoroughly enjoyable festival which touched everyone's hearts on both meanings of Easwaramma Day. Not only is it a celebration of the Mother Aspect, but as we should all remember, it is "Children's Day".

Written up by Vignesh Cumareshan
(Submitted by Sunthar Uthayan,
Region 3 Chair)

Region 3 Buddha Purnima at Mill Hill

The Mill Hill Sathya Sai Centre of Region 3 celebrated Buddha Purnima (also known as Vesak) on 19th May 2008 organised by the Youth. Vesak usually represents a triple celebration; the birth, attaining of nirvana and passing away of Buddha and usually falls on a fully moon day.

The colours of Buddhism; red, white blue, orange and white surrounded Swami in the form of decorative lanterns, flags and flowers. A special puja was hosted at the lotus feet, with the SSE children carrying flowers, incense and candle offerings in a beautiful procession as done in many Buddhist countries around the world on this day. These offerings which will wither away, are a reminder that our lives are also short spanned, and for us to use it well serving others with love and light during its short time of existence.

The programme opened with a peace chanting, filling the atmosphere with loving kindness followed by multi-faith bhajans. A presentation highlighted the becoming of Buddha from a prince to a noble preacher; Buddha 'the one who is fully awake'. Through his search for truth and nirvana, Buddha considers mere living as 'Dukka' or suffering. Age, sickness, death are inevitable for mankind, and the solution to ending this suffering is Nirvana. Buddha taught that we must follow the middle path – moderation in living. The reason for Dukkha is remaining tied to our five senses and thus remaining distant from our 'atma'.

We were fortunate to have our honorable guest speaker, venerable Sumanta who elaborated on how we should be aware of daily living, through battling of pressures between our culture and expectations and desires to live a life full of wants and desires which leads us further away from the true bliss of life, from nirvana.

The Buddhist law of 'karma' was also highlighted on this day through a story of Buddha. Once, Buddha was verbally abused without any reason and Buddha refused to be affected by these harsh words. Buddha refused to 'accept' and be affected by it and avoided karma of abusing anyone back. Just like food offered to a beggar who refuses it, the food then belongs to the giver; not the beggar. Similarly when someone offers harsh words and abuse, we should reject accepting it as then these will only belong to the giver of the abuse.

The programme concluded with a Sinhalese bhajan and aarti at the lotus feet of our beloved Sathya Sai. A sacred Sangha eight offering was made to the Sangha guest speaker blessing all at the centre.

(Submitted by Sunthar Uthayan,
Region 3 Chair)

Iford Sai Centre celebrated 'Buddha Purnima' on 24th May 2008. The main programme consisted of a Sermon by Venerable Akurala Samita of Letchworth Buddhist Centre, Pirith by a team of Buddhist Monks led by Venerable Gunnepana Sumanarama of Edmonton Buddhist Shrine. Mr Chandra Wijesundara of Walthamstow Sai Centre enlightened the congregation with 'Lord Buddha's life an teachings' in his aspring speech. A special altar in the traditional Buddhist style was set up by the devotees with colourful 'vesak' flags covering the hall. The devotees were inspired with the vibrations emerged during this event by the Buddhist monks.

Written by Ramkumar
(Submitted by Sunthar Uthayan,
Region 3 Chair)

Region 6 News from Region 6

Ellens Green annual bank holiday Sathya Sai Day on May 26th was heralded with storms and flooding, despite this the day was well attended by old & new determined devotees! Ian Mclean. MC for the day also sang and gave a talk on "all is an illusion". Bahnoon Agnew followed this with her very frank and personal experiences of Swami. Due to the

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rain we stayed and had our lunch in the hall, giving us more of an opportunity to catch up with friends and newcomers.

Jenny Gaze gave an impromptu talk about the wonderful Children's Project Trust which was set up and has grown into a home and school. It has moved to Coorg in Karnataka, from Whitefield. Swami's hand has been guiding every step in its growth to achieve the vision of Michael and Aleli.

Steven and Renata Ash and later David Ash transported us to other realms with their divine harmonies opening our hearts to the strains of the Gayatri mantra and songs to Father sky and Mother earth, Kwan Yin and Mother Mary, they improve every year!

A final Irish blessing was read by William Lambert and we were packing up to go when Dr Uppadia arrived and we had the bonus of a Q&A session in which with his infectious enthusiasm and dedication practically inspired the whole room to become volunteers. So filled with the love and blessings of our Lord and the good company of the day we said our fond adieus and wended our way home.

FOLKESTONE Spiritual Day May 17th
"Food Glorious Food"

I followed the whisperings of the wind to go serve some stranded and hungry souls in the far corners of our Region in Folkestone and the result was a miracle itself.

Some 75 people turned up, 60 of them totally new to the organisation all absolutely delighted to be served and loved this much by Swami and his representatives !!!!! and to be given an opportunity to form their very own Centre. with support from the organisation.

An enormous amount of heartfelt love and service was shown by many, for this day to have been as wonderful deep and rich as it was and credit and thanks must be given to Ahmet & Filiz & Beverley from the Woking Group, Selvum, Ugen, Ram & Kissnowtee from the Ashford group, Nabin, Gyam, Indra & Smriti from Folkestone. Juliet & Nila from Portsmouth & Ann Watts, the only representative from the Reading Group thrilled everyone with her Taise Singing and our guest speaker, our National Spiritual Co-ordinator, Mr Rajes Selvakumar had the audience enraptured with his accounts of direct personal experiences with Swami. He opened up so many hearts and filled with bliss and spiritual food, so many minds.

Another physical miracle happened the next day. A young lady of 14 years of age was debating with her mother!! Should she go to a party that she was invited to or should she attend this Spiritual gathering which she called a Puja. There was a little umming and arring and finally this young girl chose to attend Swami's Multi-Faith Satsang. She spent a lovely day enjoying all manner of new experiences and went home happy.

The next morning she awoke and when she pulled back her bedclothes, lo and behold, she found a ring on her bed. It was orange in colour and it fitted her ring finger perfectly.

Both she and her mother were ecstatic over this Baba miracle and came over immediately to tell me the tale and show me the ring.

Altogether an unforgettable experience and a memorable day for many if not most, that came on this 17th of May 2008 to Capel le Ferne, Folkestone.

Bahnoon Karim Agnew
Spiritual Co-ordinator Region 6.

Sathya Sai Schools

Many eyes, ears and hands for Sathya Sai School Leicester

Most people know that Joyce Power has organised many holiday camps at various schools in London area. The camps are based on Sathya Sai EHV and designed to have a week long of value based learning for 80-100 children. They are 'enjoyable, rewarding and cool' as the children often describe them. One of the schools where Joyce is actively involved had surplus tables, chairs and education equipments. The school offered this to her, for the benefit of our Leicester school, but the donor school had a fairly tight timescale. The challenge was to acquire the items, put them in storage and arrange to deliver them to the school. Joyce sent an email to the chairs of Regions 2 and 4, the National Service Co-ordinator and the SSS Co-ordinator on 25 April 2008.

The task was to deliver about 20 small tables/desks and 40 small chairs. In addition there were several packs of colouring pens and educational items. Within two days everything was arranged as we found one of the parents (from Leicester school), with a big carrier van, who happened to be in London. So this was also delivered very quickly on Tuesday 29 April 2008. I

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personally saw some of the items the next day and observed everything was packed so neatly and undoubtedly with much love.

Since the completion of this project, Joyce has been offered many wooden embroidery rings enough to be shared between the Leicester school, a BISSE supported school in Scotland and an orphanage/school in Puttaparthi/India adopted by a devotee. This article shows how devotees are always ready to serve in line with Swami's mission.

Prabodh Mistry
Sathya Sai Schools Co-ordinator

Sathya Sai Bookshop

The bookshop has a regularly updated website.

Please visit it at:

www.srisathyasaibookcentre.org.uk

DVDs are often being compiled and released along with new interesting books.

The SSSSO UK Website

is to be found on:

www.srisathyasai.org.uk

"Every action should be performed with an attitude of offering to God. Whatever is done must be considered as a service to God. We have to enter into service activity with that feeling and realize the invisible God through service, The supreme meaning of service is that you have to realize yourself through yourself. If one realizes who one really is, one becomes everything."

Sathya Sai Baba

BISSE

British Institute of Sathya Sai Education

Information on the Sathya Sai Education in Human Values Programme can be found on:

www.sathyasaiehv.org.uk

Love and Light SSSSO UK
Significant Diary Dates 2008 please ask your Centre or Regional Chair for details

Month	Date	Event
July	5 th or 6 th	(SSE) Regional Family Values Days
July	12 th	Additional UKCC meeting
August	22 nd - 24 th	National Retreat Stourbridge
August	30 th	National SSE Teachers' Day
August	31 st	UKCC Quarterly Meeting
September	14 th	NWC Meetings
September	27 th	Spiritual Organisations Conference on Human Values
October	11 th - 12 th	UKCC Vision Weekend
October	18 th	National Spiritual Day
November	8 th - 9 th	Akhanda Bhajans
November	19 th	Ladies' Day
November	23 rd	Sri Sathya Sai Baba's Birthday
December	6 th	UKCC Quarterly Meeting
December	7 th	NWC Meetings

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