



## Autumn's Fruits

Dear Readers, Sai Ram!

Thank you to Kishor Kumar for writing in this space so well last month. It was with a great deal of sadness that, reluctantly, (owing to illness) I had to admit that I was unable to attend this year's National Retreat at Stourbridge. Held over the Bank Holiday weekend in August, it has reaped a harvest of praise for the content of the programme and execution of it. The Bank Holiday weekend timing seems to have been something that was much appreciated by those who attended – having the Bank Holiday Monday still available after returning home on Sunday. Phyllis Krystal evidently thrilled and delighted everyone (as usual) with her perspicacious talk and highly developed intuition for answering the collective unspoken questions in the audience. Well done to the Retreat 2008 Planning Committee!

I was very pleased to be able to attend the National SSE Teachers' Day on 30<sup>th</sup> August. The day was blessed with unfamiliar bright sunshine and warmth! It was a rich event with interesting talks – some of which were very inspirational – such as those of guest speakers: Mrs Karunes Ratnasingam on 'The Benefits of a Disciplined Life', Dr Veeru Rao on 'Personal Glimpses' (a lovely portal to marvellous experiences had by Veeru at Swami's feet) and the highly popular and always enlightening Sri Ajit Papat on 'Love in Action'. As with all good events that manage to hit the right note in the planning – the talks all dovetailed beautifully! Dr Rao also later treated us to a wonderful medley of songs in 'Love Through Music' that really lifted the spirit. There were opportunities for workshop interactions and feedback to the audience on various projects and pilot schemes that are underway in SSE. Well done to all the organisers.

The next day saw your UK Central Council holding the third of this year's Quarterly meetings in Totteridge. As usual much was tackled in a very lengthy and important Agenda. Thank you to the dedicated and tirelessly working Council Members.

The visit to the European Sai Zones Conference in Athens in early September was really wonderful and very moving indeed.

Each of us from the SSSSO UK was genuinely lovingly welcomed very much as a long-lost part of a family might be. It is clear that in the minds of those Sai representatives from the 28 countries at that conference that the United Kingdom absolutely belongs in Europe! Well, we are still firmly placed in Zone 9 along with Africa and The Middle East and we are certainly not kicking up any fuss for change (that would need to be initiated from the higher international echelons) but it was a totally new and very rewarding experience for us to join in a conference with an international flavour. Paramount seems to be creating the bonds of love and friendship at the human level and then learning about the achievements and challenges of other countries.

Exchanging experiences is very helpful and often quite reassuring. On behalf of myself and the other UKCC guests who attended, I'd like to thank the European Zones for inviting us and embracing us; and the organising country, Greece, in particular for welcoming us and looking after us all so well! On September 14<sup>th</sup> I represented the Organisation at a Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust meeting as an observer. Last year the Trust very kindly supported payment of hall hire for the National Sathya Sai Education Day in September and did the same for the National Spiritual Day in October; and this year they have kindly agreed to pay for the travel costs of our very esteemed Keynote Speaker at the National Spiritual Day on the 18<sup>th</sup> September (see article further on). This coming weekend the Council is holding another 'Vision Weekend', in Devon, where we shall look at the future of this Organisation and attempt to crystallise a vision for how it might ideally look in 5 years time and plan how to achieve that. We are pleased that we shall have some SSLTP candidates with us part of the time over the weekend and they will be presenting interesting project work that is part of their SSLTP course but which is extremely practical and valuable research work for us as an Organisation. Hopefully, you will have enjoyed offering feedback and comments regarding the *DRAFT* 'Handbook for Office Bearers' that was circulated for your scrutiny.

**Love and Light,  
Rosemary Perry, National Chair**

## Advice from the Sri Sathya Sai World Foundation

### Announcement regarding the Mantra: 'Samastha Lokah Sukhino Bhavanthu':

It is customary to chant 'Lokah Samastha Sukhino Bhavanthu' thrice at the end of every Bhajan session. Bhagawan has now directed that henceforward we must chant 'Samastha Loka Sukhino Bhavanthu' (3 times). It means, "Let all the worlds be happy."

### Announcement regarding the special celebration in Prasanthi Nilayam:

There will be a special celebration called 'Sahasra Poorna Chandra Darshana Santhi Mahotsavam'. This sacred programme, which is being conducted mainly for the well being of Mankind and for world peace, commences on the morning of Saturday, 15<sup>th</sup> November 2008 and culminates in *Poornahuti* on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2008. The programme will be conducted by hundreds of Vedic scholars arriving from various parts of India. This is a unique and auspicious event. Devotees of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba should use this opportunity to sanctify their lives by coming to Prasanthi Nilayam and have Darshan of our beloved Bhagawan and receive His blessings. (9<sup>th</sup> September 2008)

**Dr. Narendranath Reddy, Director,  
Sri Sathya Sai World Foundation**

## National Spiritual Day 2008

**"In Love We Are One"**

**18<sup>th</sup> October 2008 10 am – 4 pm  
204 Leyton Road E15 1DT.**

**The Start:** The day will start at 10 am with Vedam chanting and multi-faith prayers followed by devotional songs to welcome Swami. This will be followed by an inauguration ceremony where the Spiritual Wing Co-ordinators of the eight Regions will light lamps to acknowledge the presence of our beloved Lord and reverentially accept Him as the Chief Guest for the day.

**Keynote Speaker:** Many of you have heard of Geetha Ram (see *Love and Light Issue 5, July 2005*) from the USA – the daughter of Dr Padmanabhan of Prashanti. This year, we have Geetha's brother, Prithviraj, speaking. We are sure that he will take us all in to new realms of spiritual awareness. His talk will be in two sessions of one hour each, before and after the lunch break.

**Drama:** The students of Sathya Sai School, Leicester, will stage a drama devised specially for this occasion.

**Devotional Songs:** The UK Female Youth Choir (aged 18 - 35) which performed in Swami's divine presence in 2006 in Prashanti,

will be performing an array of uplifting devotional songs and, we are sure, will make you all feel the presence of Swami in the hall.

**The End:** The day will close with a short session of devotional songs – this time by the UK Male Youth Choir. They will render an uplifting session of devotional songs for you to carry the divine vibrations away with you when you leave the hall.

But once again - we need you there on this day. Please come and share the happiness of the day with the rest of the devotees. A day not to be missed!

(On behalf of the National Spiritual Day Planning and Organising Team)

**Raj Selvakumar,  
National Spiritual Wing Co-ordinator**

## Youth Wing (18 – 35)

**All are One:**

### Study Circles with a Difference

On Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> September, the first national study circle organised by the youth (18 – 35), for the youth, took place via a telephone conference call. Although numbers were few, those who joined in found the subject intriguing. We studied the first three chapters of 'Prema Vahini' where Swami talks about the importance of good character. While talking about these points we shared what was happening in our own lives and discovered much mirroring of incidents, as if Swami was teaching all of us the same lesson at the same time. It was a real demonstration of how we are all One and how when we choose to look into our daily experiences we can see many lessons reflected back to us that Swami is teaching/showing us. If only we did more of this!

We looked at how our ego is trying to control what we do, when we do it, how we do it, who we do it with – trying to control everything, basically! And when our 'plans' don't work out the way we intend, that's when we get upset, angry, and disappointed. Examples were discussed such as unexpected traffic jams making us late for work, other people's plans delaying our own schedule for the day, not getting a response to an email when we expect it etc.

As Swami often says, "Love my uncertainty." and that is the homework for the month. We are practicing surrendering our minds' desires and expectations of how we would like things to be and instead we are embracing the uncertainty of whatever happens in the moment. We are surrendering to our higher self / 'High C' / 'God-self'. Only by practice can we change our habits. We are trying to

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learn a new habit – that of embracing uncertainty – and we'll see how we have got on when we next speak!

The next youth study circle tele-conference call will be on Wednesday 22nd October 8 pm – 9 pm. We will be looking at Chapters 4-6 of Prema Vahini as well as sharing what's been happening in our lives. If you would like to join us, please email

**Sanjay** (sanjman108@googlemail.com) or **Neil** (neil.bisarya@gmail.com) for more details.

**Sanjay Vaja, Region 5 Acting Vice Chair**

## Region 6

### 'Shaping the Spirit'

#### ...Divine Lessons learnt at the feet of our Lord.

A programme dedicated to Sri Sathya Sai Baba, by his Sai Students (former students from Swami's Colleges and Universities), and Sai Devotees and their children.

Held at Polegate Community Centre near Eastbourne on September 20<sup>th</sup> I attended a very polished, professional and truly heart-expanding day hosted by the Eastbourne Group. After the lighting of the candle, Vedas chanted and Devotional Songs sung, Kiran Patel narrated stories of Swami as photos of him were projected onto a screen. He started with some of Baba in Africa; those who were having an interview when asked how they understood him said that Baba spoke Swahili. Another, was a story of how, having discovered a devotee early in the morning laying flowers out in the shape of the religious symbols on the ground, Swami asked what he was supposed to do, the answer was to walk on them. Swami said no divinity would ever walk on these religious symbols.

There were photos of Swami and Kasturi at the old Mandir, of Sai Gita the treasured elephant that sadly died last year and how she cried when Swami didn't come out one morning to take the garland from her. ...Of Swami showering Vibhuti over the silver statue of Shirdi Sai Baba after it had been washed with milk and water and how strong was the sweet smell of Vibhuti. ...Of how, when decorating the inner Mandir, Shirdi Sai Baba's statue had to be moved and it took two rows of men to lift it because as Swami said, it was no ordinary weight because throughout the years of worship it had become heavier. Many stories were narrated of hostel days and how Swami showed his humanity and infinite care as a mother figure, with his mission of changing the mentality of his devotees.

Then three ladies told their stories about Sai Baba. Vidyulatha Narayan told about how, as children, they had come home and thrown their shoes and coats on the front porch and Swami had unexpectedly arrived charmingly giving the family time to clear it all into an adjoining room - only to then want to go into that room! ...And so the game continued leaving them and us with the lesson to ever 'be prepared'. Bharati Kerker told of how Swami always keeps his word. He had said, "You are my property - I will look after you." After a low point in her life she was asked - out of the blue - to help at Prashanti in a mass wedding, and when she went there Baba had said to her, "You have come!" Showing there is always a place in Swami's family. The last speaker, Sunayana Trasi, told her story of how, after two rejections from the ping-pong team to play at the Anantapur sports day, she played as a substitute and won - even though she had not practised. On the prize-giving day she had seen her ping-pong certificate, Swami had blessed them all but when she came to collect them it was the one certificate missing!

After a delicious lunch, came 'Truth Triumphs' a most impressive play put on by the male SSE children from Merton Centre. It was the life of Don Mario Mazzoleni. Seamlessly, the three boys interchanged playing Don Mario showing him as a young priest at the Vatican who was set for higher things but always with a sense of something 'missing' in his life. Then showing how after coming to Swami he was placed in the predicament of choosing either Swami or the Catholic Church. Then showing him surrendering and finally living and dying at Prashanti Nilayam.

A 'Question & Answer' session then followed with interesting questions posed to the panel of Sai Students. Answers incorporated aspects of: 'selfless love', 'self-discipline', 'proper direction of thoughts e.g. I can look down on myself and see everything as passing clouds', 'control of the senses', 'being people of integrity', 'seeing the bigger picture', 'low ambition is a crime!'

### Region 6 Meeting

Held on September 21<sup>st</sup> in Guildford the quarterly Regional meeting started with the now familiar Vedas chanted by devotees from Portsmouth and Southampton Groups.

Alternating devotional songs in English and Sanskrit then followed these sacred verses.

Ann Williams then talked to us about her experiences of coming from a background of Roman Catholicism to Swami and working with Dr Upadhyay on the SSSSO UK Medical Camp to Zambia. We then divided into

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groups/wings to read and comment on the draft of the 'Handbook for Office Bearers', which all Centres and Groups received. There was a deepening of understanding of the issues tackled and some constructive suggestions collected which have been sent in for inclusion in the useful booklet, which is to be printed in time for release on Swami's birthday this year.

After our shared lunch, Pierrette Poirot read some amazing facts about geese - a lesson to us all!

Devendra Ojar, the Regional Spiritual Co-ordinator's shadow talked about the Human Value plays/skits/poems/songs which each R6 Group and Centre are preparing for Swami's birthday as our birthday gift from this Region. They should not last for more than 10/15mins each. When Bahnoon Agnew returns she will co-ordinate this event.

Beverley Kissoon, R6 Service Co-ordinator gave us all a brief report on the huge work she has undertaken in this Region, and Juliet Bell gave her personal impressions of the World Education Conference held at Prashanti in July this year.

Eileen Waring, Chair of Basingstoke Group then gave us an amusing talk on her experiences of Swami, treating us to her obvious gift of dramatic story telling with the earrings to prove it!

Devotional songs were sung - led by the Woking Centre, Folkestone Group, Farnborough Group and Fleet Group members. The new version of the prayer 'Samastha Lokah Sukhino Bhavanthu' and finally, Arathi, closed the day.

**Philippa Malcomson, Chair Region 6**

### BISSE

#### British Institute of Sathya Sai Education

Information on the Sathya Sai Education in Human Values Programme and BISSE's activities can be found on:

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

#### Sathya Sai Bookshop

The bookshop has a regularly updated website. Please visit it at:

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

Love and Light SSSSO UK Significant Diary Dates 2008 Please ask your Centre or Regional Chair for details		
Month	Date	Event
October	11th – 12th	UKCC 'Vision Weekend' with SSLTP Project presentations
October	18th	National Spiritual Day
November	8th	Akhanda Bhajans: Global 24-hour Devotional Singing: 6pm on 8th to 6pm on 9th
November	19th	Ladies' Day
November	23rd	Sri Sathya Sai Baba's Birthday
November	29th	Region 1 pilots: 'Regional Office Bearer Training and Refresher Day'
November	30th	UKCC Quarterly Meeting
December	7th	NWC Meetings

*"Festivals were really intended to be used for the exclusive worship of the Divine, to enjoy the bliss of that devotion, and to overcome pain and sorrow. These holy days were instituted for the purpose of getting rid of ignorance and cultivating right knowledge, the higher wisdom and cosmic consciousness."*

*Sathya Sai Baba*

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