

Auroville International USA's Evolve Newsletter fosters the link between Auroville and its members in the USA

Poet's Corner: "Joining In Her Adventure"

- by *Chandresh Patel*

A bird I would be Or from flower to another flee Like a bee, sharing poems And laughter and glee.	I would jostle and tug Tussle and wrestle and hug. Timid would I be not Yet just as surely sweet.
Stuck would I be not To a watering hole! Why would I limit in a clique My adventure, exploring the whole?	Who would join freely, largely Her adventure called Auroville?

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"Faith is a thing that precedes knowledge, not comes after knowledge, It is a glimpse of a truth which the mind has not yet seized as knowledge "
 – Sri Aurobindo

Auro-Reunion Gatherings in Full Swing!

- *Charles Flores reports*

AVI-USA had a gathering on November 5th, 2005 which featured special guests Samatman and Vlad from the Alpha Farm Community in Oregon. They gave a presentation in the morning about the influence of Sri Aurobindo's Gnostic Community on their ideas of community. The presentation went over very well, and they came back to Lodi to do a full weekend workshop in February, 2006 that was attended by Chandresh Patel and Charles Flores among others.

On January 6, 2006, the entire AVI-USA Board converged at Lodi for their annual meeting. The Board reviewed the activities of 2005, and evaluated AVI-USA's budget and operations for 2006, implementing corporate strategies that were proposed by board member Bill Leon. Particular focus was laid upon growing our membership.

The most recent gathering occurred on April 25th, designed to coincide with the Sri Aurobindo Sadhana Peetham's Bhoomi Puja, a gathering for the groundbreaking ceremony of the expansion of the Ashram to double the size of the main building. Ex-Aurovilians and Ashramites worked together to work with matter by shoveling a few yards of topsoil, symbolically breaking the ground in a spirit of collaboration and unity.

Later there was a ceremony in which the ground soil of 15 different Sri Aurobindo Centers and Study Groups around the United States, soil from Auroville (Verité Community), blessing packets from Sri Aurobindo's and Mother's rooms, and numerous other precious items, were placed in an urn to be buried in the foundation. This of course reminds us of the famous 1968 urn ceremony in Auroville.



Tiana contributing to the urn with Dakshina. Mary and June are in the background. Photo courtesy Chetana Deorah, 2006

The next AVI-USA Reunion is a Camping Trip to Calaveras Big Trees on September 15-17. Respond as soon as you know you want to participate by email to kalikata@gmx.de and say how many persons you are and from where are you coming and whether you would have some places in your car for others. You will then get a confirmation of your reservation by email.

**Matrimandir Donations Update:
 Completion of the Matrimandir for 2008 - An Appeal to the AVI's for the Final Push**

As of June 30th this year, residents of India will no longer get an Indian tax-exemption for donations to the Matrimandir. What this means is that complete the Matrimandir by 2008, Auroville is appealing more heavily for donations from abroad. Please give generously to see the Matrimandir completed on Auroville's 39th birthday. It is final opportunity to get some especially good karma, though we still have plenty of work to do on the gardens!

Chandresh Patel Moves To Auroville

In the beginning of June, AVI-USA Board Member Chandresh Patel has left his post as Treasurer due to his move to Auroville. That position is now taken by Kalpana Patel. We at AVI-USA would like to give our warmest thanks and appreciation for all of the hard work and support he has given to the organization and are delighted he will continue as our long-distance participant and representative.



Chandresh at a recent AVI-USA Gathering. Photo courtesy Chetana Deorah, 2006

US Student Dorm

While we are dismayed to learn that David and Nadia, who have guided the next phase of the work with such talent are returning to the US, we are grateful that Ing-Marie, who came with the University of Washington program is joining Auroville and will take responsibility for the next phase. Her immediate work will be to prepare for the visit of her mentor, Karen Litfin and students visiting from UW. Recent photos of the Student dorm are online on the AVIUSA website showing our work on solarization, finishing the kitchen cabinets and landscaping. We hope that David, Nadia and son, Tristan return to Auroville soon and help maintain our warm relationship with Arcosanti in the meantime.

Issues with Website Server Resolved

As some of you know, we have had long standing issue with our website provider. Interested donors would get an erroneous message stating that the donation page was not secure. The old provider could never fully resolve this to our satisfaction.

We are pleased to announce that the server issues are now resolved in house, using Aurovilians and friends of Auroville. We are now on a new secure server, with no more false warnings, with lower costs, and better than ever!

If a problem ever arises about the website, please contact us at info@aviusa.org or call us toll free so we can rapidly resolve the issue!

Go Camping with the Auroville Family Sep 15-17:

AVI-USA Family Reunion/SASP Camping Trip at Calaveras Big Trees in California. To participate email kalikata@gmx.de

Auroville Introduction and South India Tour

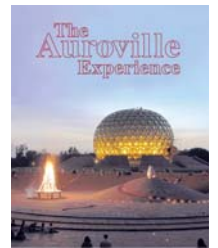
March 9-29, 2007, \$2,300

Spend 10 inspiring and interactive days in Auroville! Discover the vision, the colorful history and today's realities of the "City the Earth Needs". Aurovilians will give in-depth presentations, followed by lively bicycle tours to various sub-communities and projects. You will have the opportunity to work with Aurovilians in one of these activities and to learn about their innovative and ecological projects. Experience the amazing blend of lifestyles and the embodiment of spiritual practice through Karma Yoga in the Community. You will meet Aurovilians from many nations and will get to understand their motivations for dedicating their lives to such a bold endeavor. The Auroville introduction and the following South India tour have been offered by Auroville International Germany for over 8 years. Participants have rated this program "personally highly enriching".

For more information and an application form go to <http://www.sunwolfcreations.com/tours-india.html>

New Book: "The Auroville Experience"

Culled from the monthly paper "Auroville Today", these fifteen chapters provide the most comprehensive retrospective of Auroville's history available. From the foundation in 1968 to the visit of President Abdul Kalam, the articles and outstanding photos bring Auroville's many facets alive. Highly recommended.



Price: \$24.95 + \$3 shipping. To order, please contact the Auroville Information Office at (845) 679-5358 or aviny@aviusa.org.

8½x11, 282 pages, with color photos. © 2006, AV Today

Auroville International Meeting

Will be held in Formia, Italy on October 8-14th

Auroville International has been invited by the municipality of Formia (a first) to hold their European meeting in Italy. Julian Lines, former President of AVIUSA has been elected Chair of Auroville International and will attend along with AVI and Foundation for World Education Board member, Paula Murphy. The agenda will cover the International Zone, Auroville's relationship with the United Nations and 40th birthday observance in 2008 among other topics.

For more information please visit the events page at Auroville International's website: <http://www.auroville-international.org>

Mary Alexander Named New President of AVI-USA.

For many years Auroville pioneers, Jack and Mary Alexander, were primarily responsible for AVIUSA and its Sacramento office. We are delighted Mary has stepped back into a leadership position in our organization. Mary's "day job" is school teacher. Last year she gave a workshop in Auroville on Empowerment Training.

Some Reflections on Auroville and America - by Mary Alexander, AVI-USA President

AVI-USA had a face-to-face board meeting at the lovely Sri Aurobindo Sadhana Peetham Ashram in Lodi over the weekend of January 27-29 with some very stimulating input from additional AVI members during a portion of the meeting. I came away with three questions that I wanted to put before the larger Auroville family here in United States.

The first is a question that I have been reflecting on alone for a while: How do we support each other in our spiritual growth without becoming a religion?

Under that would come the questions: What distinguishes spiritual education and growth from religious education and growth, and what can we learn from people who have no affiliation or particular interest in Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, but who are sincere about their spirit and about contributing to the spirit nation and the earth?

The second major question comes courtesy of Wolfgang Schmidt-Reinecke, who spent years working with AVI-Germany: What is the nature of being committed to Auroville and its ideals as one who lives in the United States and intends to continue living in the United States?

Sub-questions of that are: What do we have to offer Auroville besides money, and what does Auroville have to offer us? What do we have to offer each other?

The third question is one that has suddenly seemed urgent to me, and which was touched upon by both Wolfgang and also John Robert Cornell who has done a lot of reflection--listening. What are the qualities of the soul of the United States, the Truth of its being?

In the past, this question has been overwhelming, and I have put it aside to contemplate later. Now, however, it is calling me to notice. Germany has been exploring this question for many years, and Wolfgang said that ultimately they asked themselves what they loved about their country and what they hated about it, in order to address both the light and shadow side of the soul. Dakshina suggestion it might be useful to ask people from outside to also give their perceptions, and I do remember a discussion many years ago in Auroville when Vikas, an Englishman, suggestion that pioneering might an element of the soul of the U.S. Christoph, who is German, has suggestion that the reverence for and valuing the land for its own sake is unique to the United States, which is what John Robert has been hearing as he listens.

I am not offering answers to any of these questions at this time. Rather I am inviting conversation among all who hear them. One night, on our recent visit to Auroville, Jack and I sat with friends watching old videos of Auroville made at different times throughout Auroville's history. It was like watching home movies with family members as people recognized themselves and

others, made comments on changes in clothing and landscape, and joked about what people were saying. One young man commented somewhat ruefully, We dont talk about those things with each other anymore.

But we can. The country has changed much in the last 37 years. It is possible to talk with more people about the evolution of human consciousness.

To reiterate:

- How do we support each other in our spiritual growth without becoming a religion?
- What is the nature of being committed to Auroville and its ideals as one who lives in the United States and intends to continue living in the United States?
- What are the qualities of the soul of the United States, the Truth of its being?

The changes that have occurred make it possible to see these questions from new angles, to have a wider conversation. Will you join me?

You can contact Mary Alexander c/o AVI-USA (address on p.4)

Michael Murphy, founder of Esalen, Named to International Advisory Council

The International Advisory Council (IAC) of Auroville now includes the author of "Golf in the Kingdom" and "The Future of the Body". Michael Murphy, who studied Sri Aurobindo's thought with the philosopher Frederick Spiegelberg at Stanford



Michael Murphy, founder of Esalen, is now on Auroville's IAC

in the '50s will return to India next February to join with actress and dancer, Mallika Sarabhai, BBC Broadcaster, Sir Mark Tully and Doudou Diene, a Senegalese who has a special portfolio on racism from the UN, former European Union advisor, Dr. Marc Luckx Ghisi and Malini Parthasarathy, from *The Hindu* newspaper. This remarkable group meets at least once a year to consult with Auroville. Marc Ghisi helped host a conference on business and is helping to network Auroville's vision with the wider world of potential partners.

Two Dreams, One World

The Auroville Information Office will honor the visit of HH the Dalai Lama to Woodstock by screening "Two Dreams, One World" on Saturday, September 16th. This 35 minute video records the 1994 visit of the Dalai Lama to Auroville. It captures some intimate moments of humor and delight during the tour and the Dalai Lama's support for the community and the progress he observed since his first visit in 1973. Voluntary donations will benefit the Pavilion of Tibetan Culture in Auroville. Those interested in the writings of Pavilion founder, Claude Arpi, will be interested to visit his website: <http://www.claudearpi.net>

