



# GURUKULA NETWORK

Newsletter of Neo-Humanist Schools and Research Institutes  
affiliated with Ananda Marga Gurukula

Issue 21

October 2005

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*Sa'vidya'ya'vimuktaye - Education is that which liberates*

## Gurukula Network

Newsletter and Journal of  
Neohumanist Schools  
and Institutes  
affiliated to  
Ananda Marga Gurukula

Two yearly issues published October and May serve as a means of communication for Neohumanist Schools and projects around the world.

Please send us news of your schools and projects, reports on research and publication efforts, articles on Neohumanist Education, stories, pictures, ETC notes, classroom activities, etc. by **April 1st for the May 2006 issue**

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The articles in this newsletter represent an evolving process and not necessarily official policy.

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**Donations** are welcome for AMGK Endowment Fund and Gurukula Network as well as schools and projects. Please make checks payable to Ananda Marga Gurukula and send to AMGK Liaison Office.

**Shrii Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar** inspired the establishment of Ananda Marga Schools in 1963 out of which grew an international network of schools and the Neohumanist Education system. In 1990 he founded the Ananda Marga Gurukula University.

## VISION OF ANANDA MARGA GURUKULA

Ananda Marga Gurukula is engaged in creating an international network of Neohumanist Schools and Institutes to hasten the advent of a society in which there is love, peace, understanding, inspiration, justice and health for all beings.

## OBJECTIVES OF ANANDA MARGA GURUKULA

- To serve humanity with neohumanist spirit and to acquire knowledge for that purpose.
- To establish a strong base in Anandanagar and around the world in order to carry on the legacy of it's founder for the benefit of future generations.
- To provide a sound and conducive environment for students for their physical, social, intellectual, creative and spiritual well being.
- To promote ethical values in individuals and implement these values in the management of projects, schools and institutions.
- To establish and maintain schools and special academic institutions around the world as well as a cyber university.
- To initiate teacher education programs to improve and upgrade the quality of education on all academic levels.
- To promote Tantra, Neohumanism and PROUT (Progressive Utilization Theory) as the foundation for building a universal society.
- To initiate intellectual dialogues and research for all around renaissance of society.
- To facilitate the placement of volunteers across cultures to help build meaningful relationships and to support community and social change projects.
- To support the building of a global eco-village network (Master Units) .
- To encourage the development of micro-enterprises for sustainability of social service projects.

### Chancellor of Ananda Marga Gurukula

Ac. Shambhushivananda Avt., Kulapati  
<kulapati@gurukul.edu>

Ananda Marga Gurukula serves as the Board of Education for Neohumanist Schools and Institutes around the world. These Neohumanist Schools and projects, some of which are featured in Gurukula Network, are managed by the Education Relief and Welfare Section and Women's Welfare Department of Ananda Marga.

**ERAWS - Global Education In-charge** Ac. Priyakrsnananda Avt.  
**WWD - Global Education In-charge** Avtk. Ananda Sucita Ac.

## NEOHUMANIST EDUCATION

Universal Love and Values  
Holistic Development of the Child  
Astaunga Yoga  
Ecological and Social Consciousness  
Academic, Practical and Personal Skills  
Knowledge of Self and World Applied for Universal Welfare  
Joyful Learning through the Arts  
Culturally Sensitive Approach  
Emergent and Integrated Curriculum  
Exemplary Role of the Educators



# ANANDA MARGA GURUKULA GLOBAL LIAISON OFFICE ONGOING PROGRAMMES, UPDATES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

## **Ananda Marga Gurukula**

<[www.gurukul.edu](http://www.gurukul.edu)>  
[amgk.glo@gurukul.edu](mailto:amgk.glo@gurukul.edu)

## **CNS – Centres for Neohumanist Studies**

Croatia - [cns.hr@gurukul.edu](mailto:cns.hr@gurukul.edu), <[www.cns.hr](http://www.cns.hr)>  
Sweden – [cns.se@gurukul.edu](mailto:cns.se@gurukul.edu), <[www.cns-se.org](http://www.cns-se.org)>  
Taiwan – [gkacademy.tw@gurukul.edu](mailto:gkacademy.tw@gurukul.edu)  
USA – [cns.us@gurukul.edu](mailto:cns.us@gurukul.edu)

## **Music College at Uma Nivas**

<<http://www.gurukul.edu/~unmc>>

## **Acupunture Institute at Ananda Nagar**

<<http://acuindia.org/>>

## **AMGK Taiwan**

<[www.gurukula.org.tw](http://www.gurukula.org.tw)>

## **Neohumanist Education**

<[www.nhe.gurukul.edu](http://www.nhe.gurukul.edu)>

## **NHE Forum**

NHE Forum is an on-line discussion group for those interested in or working in NHE schools and projects. To join, please write to <[amgk.glo@gurukul.edu](mailto:amgk.glo@gurukul.edu)>

## **NEW ! CNS Forum**

CNS-Forum is a format for the exchange of ideas among Neohumanist educators who are qualified and interested in higher education, beyond K-12. CNS-Forum provides an opportunity to help to develop the various departments and faculties of Ananda Marga Gurukula. If interested write to <[amgk.glo@gurukul.edu](mailto:amgk.glo@gurukul.edu)>

## **NHE Resources**

NHE Resources is a set of web-based resources for those working in NHE schools. It contains articles, information and classroom aides. If you would like to access these pages, please visit <[www.nhe.gurukul.edu/resources.html](http://www.nhe.gurukul.edu/resources.html)>, and sign up for a login name and password.

## **Distance Learning Programmes**

The two distance learning programmes for NHE teachers are both progressing with many students. The Neohumanist Diploma Programme is a one year or more in depth tuition programme, certifying the student as an NHE early childhood teacher. The Neohumanist Introductory Programme is a three month or more programme, with the option for certification as an NHE early childhood associate teacher. For more details see the description of Distance Learning Programmes at: [http://www.gurukul.edu/instit\\_distancelearning.php](http://www.gurukul.edu/instit_distancelearning.php)

## **Standards Available**

Ananda Marga Gurukula Standards for kindergarten and primary schools are now available. You may write to <[amgk.glo@gurukul.edu](mailto:amgk.glo@gurukul.edu)> for a copy or you may download a copy directly from NHE Resources.

## **NHE Introductory Program in Spanish**

The NHE Introductory Programme is available in Spanish. To get an electronic copy either through e-mail or on a CD, please write to [amgk.glo@gurukul.edu](mailto:amgk.glo@gurukul.edu). Didi Ananda Anuradha is coordinating the translation of NHE material into Spanish. If you have any other NHE material already translated, or if you are interested in helping with this project, please contact Didi at: <[wisdom@racsaco.cr](mailto:wisdom@racsaco.cr)>

## **Volunteers for Your Project**

Ananda Marga Gurukula offers a service to bring volunteers in contact with NHE schools and community projects, that are highlighted on the AMGK website. The volunteer can choose one or more projects and Gurukula will help the volunteers to find the right project according to their skills and desires. When the choice for a project is clear, then Gurukula will contact the project and, if needed, help the project-manager to work out further details. If the project is full, then Gurukula helps the volunteers to find another project.

In the past there were some problems with the application-form, but since April 2004 that problem has been solved and volunteers are now responding regularly, eager to volunteer in a holistic environment. Many volunteers like to combine their holidays with doing service and stay for a short period, while others take a sabbatical year and offer their services for a longer period.

The most popular countries chosen by volunteers are Thailand and India. Volunteering in these countries, or for instance Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Laos, Venezuela or Moldova, is a chance to help children and people in communities to develop themselves and break through their endless cycle of poverty.

More info at the Gurukula-website: [www.gurukul.edu](http://www.gurukul.edu) under the tab <helping us>. If you would like to take part with your project in the Gurukula Volunteer Program, then please write to [mayadhiisa@gmail.com](mailto:mayadhiisa@gmail.com)

## **Gurukula Network On Line**

An electronic version of Gurukula Network is available on the Gurukula web site. Many past issues are also posted there.

## **NHE Publications**

For a listing of NHE Publications please refer to last issue of Gurukula Network or the on-line version.



*We are excited to announce*

## NHE Educators Summit "Sharing NHE Methods and Materials" July 18-25, 2006 in Ydrefors, Sweden

### Objectives

- Practical training in NHE for new and old teachers and directors
- Exchange of NHE practices in the classroom between directors and teachers in NHE schools
- Training of NHE Diploma Programme students
- Graduation of students who have completed the NHE Diploma Programme

### What the Conference Offers

- Sharing of tested NHE classroom practices by senior directors and teachers of NHE schools from around the world, including valuable practical knowledge and skills in various subjects for early childhood, junior high and high school aged children.
- Building confidence and creativity in developing further research and educational material.
- Guidance for NHE Diploma distance learning course students.
- Inspiration and assistance for those interested in starting new NHE schools.
- Exchange on YES, STUVOL, ELF, SPROUT programs and publications

- Certificate of attendance by AMGK (accepted as Staff Development Credits for NHE Teachers)

### What You Can Do

- All are encouraged to make requests for specific workshops that would benefit their projects.
- Those offering to share workshops, materials or activities are asked to submit their proposals by December 31st 2005.
- Please let us know of your intention to attend as soon as possible. [amgk.glo@gurukul.edu](mailto:amgk.glo@gurukul.edu)

### Costs

Euro 200 per person for accommodation, food and programme materials  
Pre-registration: Advance of Euros 50 (nonrefundable) to be paid by March 31st, 2006

### Organised by

Ananda Marga Gurukula in coordination with ERAWS and WWD Berlin Sector  
Details and confirmed participants will be regularly announced on NHE Forum and at [<www.gurukul.edu/conf2006/index.html>](http://www.gurukul.edu/conf2006/index.html)

*"NHE Educators Summit is an opportunity for all those who are interested in the NHE Education system to come together and share their practical wisdom. I encourage all our concerned workers and teachers to avail of this opportunity of sharing and learning."*

*Ac. Shambhushivananda Avadhuta, Kulapati, AMGK*

*"This Educators Summit for sharing practical material has been requested from many corners. This is now the opportunity for everyone to bring their multimedia presentations on their school and material to present in workshops with others. We will be contacting individuals who are requested to bring their experiences but everyone please feel free to contribute the things that really work with children that you have been applying. We are looking forward to accommodate everyone's needs and gifts in this conference."*

*Avtk. Ananda Rama Ac., Avtk. Ananda Bhadra Ac., Programme Incharges*

# 15 Years of Ananda Marga Gurukula



## Last Prabhat Samgiita

*Amra gare nobo gurukul  
Jināner āloke ráungiye dobo  
Pratiti kunri phul  
Keha ná thákibe dure  
Bájábo pratiti tare  
Bándhibo priitiri dore  
E manihāre atul  
Keha ná thákibe piche  
Theli ná kare o nüice  
Sabe átmiya biráje  
Mano májhe doduldul*

*We will establish Gurukul  
We will dye each and every bud  
with the light of knowledge  
None will stay away  
We will tune each and every heart  
We will bind everybody with the thread of love  
and create a garland of incomparable beauty  
None will stay behind,  
None will be thrown at the bottom  
All will exist as kith and kin, with their minds full  
of sweetness and tenderness for all*

Ananda Marga Gurukula (AMGK) was founded on September 7, 1990 by philosopher and spiritual teacher Shrii Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar

(1921-1990). The song in the sidebar is the last of 5018 songs that he composed inviting all to help to materialize this last vision of his. He declared the aim of AMGK to be: “To serve humanity with neohumanist spirit and to acquire knowledge for that purpose”

The functions of AMGK are as follows:

- ◆ AMGK serves as a higher educational body for all disciplines
- ◆ AMGK replaces the earlier Ananda Marga Board of Education and gives academic guidance for NHE schools managed by WWD and ERAWS
- ◆ AMGK sets standards for all NHE schools
- ◆ AMGK educates and certifies NHE teachers
- ◆ Affiliates all NHE schools to AMGK after meeting the standards set by AMGK

## Some of the achievements in the first 15 years of AMGK

- ◆ Higher Education Institutes at Anandanagar and Uma Nivas
- ◆ Centres for Neohumanist Studies (CNS) in Sweden, Croatia, USA, Taiwan and Italy
- ◆ 10 years of Gurukula Network newsletter
- ◆ General Standards for NHE schools written and distributed
- ◆ Neohumanist Education faculty offers two distance learning courses, the NHE Introductory Certificate Course and the NHE Early Childhood Diploma Programme.
- ◆ YES Program – Yoga Education in Schools - provides materials and offers seminars in astaunga yoga for children in the form of Circle Time and Quiet Time activities that include yoga as play, moral teaching, environmental studies, and a variety of STUVOL activities.
- ◆ NHE Publications has published several books and CDs. Many more in process.
- ◆ AMGK Volunteer Placement Program
- ◆ Process of affiliation of NHE schools and certification of teachers has started

## Affiliated Schools

The process of affiliating all of Ananda Marga schools worldwide to AMGK has just begun. Four schools have thus far completed the process. Congratulations to all of them.

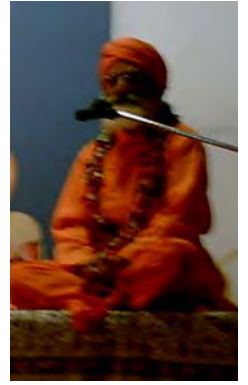
Ananda Marga Academy - Kenya  
Principal: Avtk Ananda Giitika Ac

Morning Star Preschool - USA  
Director: Mary Jane Glassman

Progressive School of Long Island - USA  
Director: Eric Jacobson

Sunrise Primary School - UK  
Director: Meeta Lovage

# *Renaissance Universal Speech at DMS in Taiwan Oct 8, 2005 A Summary*



## Emanative Flows and Spiritual Education

Ac. Shambhushivananda Avadhuta

The song of life is the song of movement. Where there is life there is a flow of vitality. Nothing is stationary in this universe. Everything moves and this movement represents the emanative flows in this universe. We appear to come from a land of invisibility and at some stage; we disappear into the void of invisibility. Our existence is an eternal mystery waiting to be unravelled. Only a small portion of our individual and collective existence comes within the scope of our understanding. Some of it is captured by the lens of our direct and indirect perceptions, some by varying degrees of mental conceptions and the rest by either intuitive flashes or revelations from omniscient grace. Our evolutionary journey is an unending endeavour to continuously expand the domain of our experience and comprehension and attain the stance from where there is no more desire to return. That coveted state has been described by sages as a state of dynamic equilibrium and unfathomable composure and is also popularly known as Nirva'na or Sama'dhi or A'nanda. True education therefore is a process to hasten the attainment of such a state of being. All other goals are subservient to this ultimate desideratum. That is why we say, "Knowing oneself is the real knowledge".

In this worldly sea of vibrations, there are innumerable rhythms, each having its own structural peculiarity and functional uniqueness. These waves or vibrations can be described as "Emanative Flows". In Yoga, these emanative flows are also considered part and parcel of Ota and Protta Yoga. These emanative flows are of many types viz., physical, physico-psychic, psychic, psycho-spiritual and spiritual. Some emanations are subtle while others crude. Some stem from the spiritual domain while others belong to the mundane plane. They influence one another in varying degrees and determine the status of an entity. Our collective existence is a collection of all emanative flows.

### Physical Emanations

Each object or entity has its own vibration (emanative flow) and unique properties. That is known as its dharma or special nature. Material objects like chemicals and compounds have their special characteristics and those characteristics are known as Vastu Dharma. It is the task of material science to unravel the secrets of matter and explore the progressive ways of their utilizations for the benefit of humankind and all the beings of this universe. It is a huge task in itself and requires collective endeavor. More importantly, it requires a dual perspective viz., first, to avoid the wastage or misuse of resources of the world and second, to ensure that the benefit of this knowledge goes not only to a few people or species but to all beings. Progressive Education, therefore, is about values of life as much as about increasing the knowledge of facts or mere flow of information. The incorporation of Progressive Utilization Theory in our educational system is an important element. Its objective is to goad the physical emanations of this world towards benevolence and greater welfare in all the strata of life. One important area of study is improving our understanding of the secrets of human body including its physiological, psychological and spiritual aspects. Our educational system puts this area of self-control of all glands, sub-glands, systems of hormone secretion and control of sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems at the core of its curriculum. With a greater understanding of systems of emanative flows of human beings, there will emerge a new science of spiritual bio-psychology. Its theory and application will enhance the benefits to the human beings of all ages. For example, with the greater understanding of dynamics of area of habenula nuclei that lies just beneath the pineal in the brain, we may be able to improve the utilization of psycho-spiritual exercises. The superior and inferior colliculus are visual and auditory pathways in the brain

and their proper control can assist us in improving our learning and experiences. There is still a lot to discover in the area of controlling systems involved in firing of neural networks. The influence of electrical and magnetic impulses on our neurological system and consciousness is another area that concerns interdependence of emanative flows. The quest for a healthy body in a healthy mind opens a vista of opportunity to educational objectives of the future. The emanative flows of all material objects are also likely to be better understood with a fuller appreciation of the role of microvita in this creation. An important goal of moral science (yama-niyama) is to direct the potentiality of human mind towards elimination or minimization of disparities that encourage the clash among emanative flows of created beings. In a nutshell, the physical emanations pose a challenge as well as provide an opportunity to create a world of sentient peace, beauty and harmony.

## Psychic Emanations

The importance of psychic-emanative –flows is far greater than the physical emanative-flows. The psychic potentiality is also far greater than the physical potentialities. The danger of mis-utilization and harm done is also greater in case of psychic emanations as compared to physical emanations. Ideas and thoughts are wasted if they are not properly directed or focused. Wastage is usually of two types:

**Psychic extravaganza** - engagement of mind in thoughts which do not lead to the welfare of either individual or society but do not necessarily bring its downfall.

**Psychic-Exploitation** - utilization of psychic potentiality in a way that leads to the downfall of masses (others) at the cost of benefit to oneself or to a mere few individuals.

The role of progressive education is to discover and utilize ways by which both psychic-extravaganza and psychic exploitation can be stopped and constructive channels are created for expressing the potentiality of psychic emanations. The inclusion of neohumanist philosophy as an integral part of our educational curricula is an antidote for counteracting the pseudo-culture and exploitative mentality created by the distorted psychic emanations. Neohumanist attainment is the result of arduous discipline in constructive and benevolent thinking. It is indeed a penance (tapasya) and requires training under competent and accomplished teachers. Rationality (Viveka) alone is the guide in this work. It requires patience, ingenuity and long-term commitment. This task is no doubt difficult but not impossible. Each creature has their jiiva-dharma. That dictates the nature of their psychic emanations. The objective of our educational program is to bring about psychic transmutation and physical metamorphosis through a well regulated code of conduct, sense withdrawal and spiritually directed thinking. Spirituality nurtures universal love within a disciplined and responsible environment. It leads to expansion of mind, enhanced awareness and blissful expressions. This training can benefit other creatures too.

## Spiritual Emanations

The greatest danger in human progress is the 'ego'. A great many so-called elevated persons have fallen from the divine path due to ignorance, carelessness, or flagrant violation of codes of discipline prescribed for the spiritual aspirants by the Sadguru. We easily notice the faults of others but rarely introspect and reflect on our own faults. Those who reflect and always remember the Supreme Being are insulated from the danger of being detracted by their ego. When we realize that the summum bonum of all our endeavours is to please the Divine Master, there is little scope to deviate from the spiritual path. In that situation, the supreme grandeur of spiritual emanative flow becomes our boat in the ocean of life. It helps us cross the ideational gap (bhava-sa'gar) that separates microcosm from macrocosm. The power of spiritual emanation is considered as a million times stronger than the physical or psychic-emanations. The objective of today's renaissance is to make each person realize the hidden significance of spiritual emanative flow (devotion). The time has come to tap its unutilized potential in order to solve all problems of our individual and collective life and unite us all with the purest bonds of love, compassion and cordiality. Spiritual education of children (of all ages) is the beginning of this task.



# Update on the Acupuncture Institute and Free Community Clinic at Ananda Nagar, India

By Charles Martley

The Acupuncture Institute and Free Community Acupuncture clinic is still in operation and the clinic has been able to continue to serve its community. Most of the support that the clinic receives has been in the form of volunteer acupuncturists from around the world who have shown the desire to do service. Through a few articles in the acupuncture trade magazines we have gained the reputation as the place to do volunteer acupuncture, seeing anywhere from 30 to 60 patients during a morning and then teaching to the students and staff in the afternoon. Even with the fee that these volunteers need to pay, the numbers have kept us very busy. Last year from October to the end of March we had volunteers from both Europe and the United States and again this year is shaping up to be a repeat of last year. These volunteers are not members of Ananda Marga; they are just those people are in touch with a desire to serve and this pulls at them. It continues to surprise me just how much one learns from running a project like this, how much love comes from the effort, the opportunity to see and hear these people's stories of what they find in the faces of our neighbours. I would like to share with you one volunteer's story about his visit to Ananda Nagar and his time working with the Acupuncture Clinic.

## From the Heart, Acupuncture in India

Hello, my name is Brett. I would like to share my experience of volunteering as an acupuncturist in a small, rural village in India. When one thinks of India the word acupuncture doesn't exactly spring to mind. While living there for four months I was quite moved to learn that acupuncture is becoming more widely practiced as the efficacy of the medicine gains recognition. Indians are very practical people. If they see that something works they use it.

The village where I volunteered for two weeks last February is called Ananda Nagar. It is located in the state of West Bengal in northeast India. It is a community of both socially and spiritually dedicated people. Service is at the heart of all that goes on there and that is what I went there to learn. Living in America there is the tendency to get so absorbed in the daily grind of making a living and looking out for our own interests that the aspect of serving others, which inspired many of us to get into medicine in the first place, gets lost or neglected. My time at Ananda Nagar was a vivid reminder of what it truly means to be in the service of others.

Ananda Nagar is surrounded by farm land speckled with small villages. This is rural India. The people generally work long, hard hours making barely enough to put food on the table for large families. Malnutrition is a serious issue. The conditions I witnessed are reminiscent of those in rural China during the time when Chinese medicine was being developed and used exclusively. Ananda Nagar is centered around a free hospital that is truly practicing integrative medicine. The acupuncture clinic where I worked sits right next to allopathic, homeopathic, and ayurvedic clinics. There is also an acupuncture school that provides training for students and operates in conjunction with the clinic.

My first few days at the clinic were a bit overwhelming. It is a free clinic and no one is turned away. There are no appointments so we would see between 20 and 50 walk-in patients every morning till 1 pm six days a week. Compared to 2-4 patients seen per day in the student clinic back at school in the US this was quite a shift! Each morning at the clinic I sat opposite an Indian acupuncturist who translated for me. He would ask the patient in Bengali what the main complaint was and then translate as I asked further questions, felt the pulses, and looked at the tongue. I would then write up the diagnosis, treatment plan, and choose the points which would then be given to the students who would administer the treatment. If it was slow I would supervise needle placement or demonstrate a certain needle technique such as scalp acupuncture or threading. It was a bit strange to be in the role of supervisor coming right out of school, but I soon realized that the education I received was excellent and I was happily surprised to find that I had more to offer than I would have thought. After the initial shock of being in the clinic, I found that my education served me well and my confidence began to build.

In the afternoons I took the role of teacher. I was impressed with the level of dedication of both the students and the teachers. Students do not take education for granted in India, they recognize the value that education plays in improving

their lives. The students do not have the resources to buy their own books. The school has a small library of textbooks covering the foundations of acupuncture, though access is limited because these are the only copies. Therefore, photocopies of the original books are used by the students instead. A wider range of current TCM (Traditional Chinese Medicine) texts would be invaluable at Ananda Nagar.

In working at the clinic I initially found that the most difficult thing to get used to was the condition of the patients' bodies relative to their age. I was taken aback by women coming in with heavily wrinkled skin and barely perceptible pulses complaining of pain throughout their entire body. At first I would have guessed they were in their fifties, but then discovered they were typically only in their twenties or thirties! These people work very hard, usually bent over in the fields, starting from a very young age. There was clear evidence of the kidney qi becoming depleted due to overwork.

On top of this there was a lack of supplementation of the pre-natal kidney qi due to malnutrition. As one might expect, the life expectancy of people in this region of India is short. An interesting and rewarding aspect of working in the clinic was witnessing the crystal clear presentation of patterns of pathology. The Chinese medicine that I learned in school really came alive there. I found differentiation of signs and symptoms into patterns to be much clearer than in the US. I would go down the list of kidney vacuity signs and symptoms and the patient would quite often answer the questions affirmatively. For instance, if the patient's main complaint was knee pain, I would ask them 'Any low back pain?' Yes. 'Any ear ringing?' Yes. 'Night urination?' Yes. Etc., etc. It was reassuring and quite beautiful to see the medicine we practice so accurately displayed in the clinical setting. This came as a contrast to the patients I have often seen in the US who often present mixed, sometimes conflicting, symptoms of excess and deficiency. Again, I believe this is reflective of the similar conditions in rural India today and in rural China at the time when this medicine was developing.

The acupuncture department at Ananda Nagar is ten years old. It is a successful and well run program. The evidence of this is in the high number of satisfied returning patients. As I mentioned earlier, Indians are very practical people and if something doesn't work it is discarded. There is no time to waste in a place where subsistence living is the norm. So to see the patients' dedication to this relatively new form of medicine was heart warming. It gave me great pride in the medicine we practice. We treated solely with acupuncture and a little moxabustion. The needles used are all donated and therefore precious. If there was enough funding for herbs, along with a more amicable political relationship between India and China that would make importing herbs more viable, the results seen in the clinic would be even more dramatic. Given that the root cause of most patients' ailments was deficiency, it is easy to see that herbs would be a great help at Ananda Nagar. As it was, using just acupuncture, I witnessed some incredible cases of patients' condition improving. When I say condition I'm not talking about a headache or an energetic tune up. This is front line acupuncture. During my two weeks at Ananda Nagar, I witnessed two different cases of young children who had never walked before receiving acupuncture and as a result took their first steps. I saw a man with severe hemiplegia who could barely speak improve dramatically in two weeks. I also saw cases of elephantiasis and severe deformity of the limbs that were beyond any help acupuncture could offer. Overall it was evident how beneficial acupuncture can be, especially when it is administered daily or every other day. I witnessed first hand a cumulative inertia in successive treatments that is not present when we only treat someone once a week.

It was wonderful to see this medicine that I love shine so brightly in these people's lives half way around the world. During my time at Ananda Nagar I gained a level of confidence both in myself as a practitioner and in the medicine itself. A major part of this was due to the volume of patients I saw. In the course of two weeks I saw roughly 300 people and felt 300 pulses! Experience is indeed the greatest teacher. I found that the most challenging aspect as well as the greatest gift was the experience of simply being with people. In some of the cases I saw it was evident that the primary cause of the ailments from which they were suffering was their lifestyle and their diet. Unfortunately these are two things that they have little hope of changing due to the living conditions there. Even though this was sometimes the case, it was a huge lesson for me to learn how to just be with someone and listen. I would highly recommend this experience to any acupuncturist, whether a seasoned practitioner or fresh out of school. You can't imagine how much you have to offer until you experience a place like Ananda Nagar.

*Brett Bloomberg graduated from Southwest Acupuncture College in July 2004. He then travelled around the world and is now settling down to practice in the New England area. Anyone who is interested in volunteering at Ananda Nagar can contact director Charles Martley, an acupuncturist practicing in Vermont. He can be reached at : Acupuncture Institute of Ananda Nagar, 573 Rankin Road, Moretown, Vermont, 05660 <charles@acuindia.or>, <www.acuindia.org>.*

*Please pass this on to any health care providers you use. They may want to do the same, and be of service, become a sister clinic or want to send any support they can. We could use the help. Thank you.*



# The Abha Light College of Natural Medicine Opens in East Africa

## First college for homeopathic training

The Abha Light College of Natural Medicine has opened in Kenya through the teamwork of a group of experienced homeopaths, naturopaths and traditional healers from The United Kingdom, India, and Kenya. Special thanks go to Dr. Robin Murphy (USA) for his strong support of this endeavour and many others as well. The college includes separate diploma courses in Homeopathy, Naturopathy, African Traditional Medicine (phytotherapy) and Reflexology. There are plans to bring on board a department of Chiropractic in the near future and also Therapeutic Massage.

### Overview of the Courses

#### Naturopathy

A 3-year lecture course includes practical in-clinic internship leading to an Abha Light Diploma in Naturopathy (ADN).

Accreditation: The course is affiliated with Naturopathy in India and recognized by the Kenya Institute of Alternative Medicine, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health.

Institute of Alternative Medicine, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health.

#### Traditional Medicine (African & International)

A 3-year lecture course includes practical in-clinic internship leading to an Abha Light Diploma in Traditional Medicine (ADTM).

#### Homeopathy

A 3-year lecture course includes practical in-clinic internship leading to an Abha Light Diploma.

Accreditation: Graduates are awarded a Diploma in Homeopathy, ADHom. The course is affiliated with London College of Practical Homeopathy (LCPH) in UK and recognized by the Kenya

#### Reflexology

This 14 session course (in 3 months) covers Reflexology, Anatomy & Physiology as it relates to reflexology.

Certification: Students passing the examination will receive an Abha Light Diploma in Reflexology (RDA)

### Course Structure

In all three disciplines - Naturopathy, Homeopathy and Traditional Medicine - students share certain common units: Anatomy & Physiology, Clinical Diagnosis & Clinical Preparation, Physiological Pathology and Life Skills. All students gain a basic knowledge of the fundamentals of Reflexology, Nutrition and Naturopathy. Each discipline also gains some introductory knowledge of the other practices. This approach enables all students to be specialized in a particular discipline yet be familiar with the others.

### How You Can Help

- ◆ Books, software and magazines of all sorts are needed in all aspects of health- alternative medicine, self-improvement, nutrition, clinical medicine and homeopathy.
- ◆ Computers and internet technology are needed for students' resource and training.
- ◆ Qualified individuals are welcome to teach for a 3 month term.
- ◆ The syllabus for Naturopathy & Homeopathy is still being refined. Relevant articles are welcome as is direct assistance in syllabus-making.
- ◆ Contacts to potential donors (in the public domain or otherwise) are welcomed.

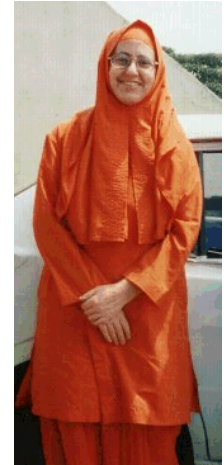
***For further information, please visit their website <[www.abhalight.org/college](http://www.abhalight.org/college)> or contact the Director, Didi Ananda Ruchira at <[a.ruchira@abhalight.org](mailto:a.ruchira@abhalight.org)>***

## History

Abha Light College of Natural Medicine is a part of the Abha Light Foundation. Abha Light is concerned with improving and maintaining the health of the people using homeopathy and complementary medicines, alternative medicines and health practices through homeopathic and natural medicine mobile and permanent health clinics, health training programs, schools of homeopathy and complementary medicines and natural therapies.

Abha Light Foundation is a registered NGO in Kenya since 2001. Since 1998 they have been working in the community. ALF has treated thousands of patients through their mobile clinics in the Nairobi slums and at various villages throughout Kenya. By the year 2000 they gained enough public support and confidence to open their first clinic at Kariobangi North slum. ALF networks with other NGOs, CBOs and clinics with patient referrals.

Didi Ananda Ruchira, Director Abha Light Foundation has been the driving force behind this work since 1998 and has been honoured as a Fellow of the Kenya Institute of Alternative Medicine for her contribution in promoting homeopathy and alternative medicine in Kenya. Didi is a yogic nun of Ananda Marga for 26 years and a homeopath since 1997.



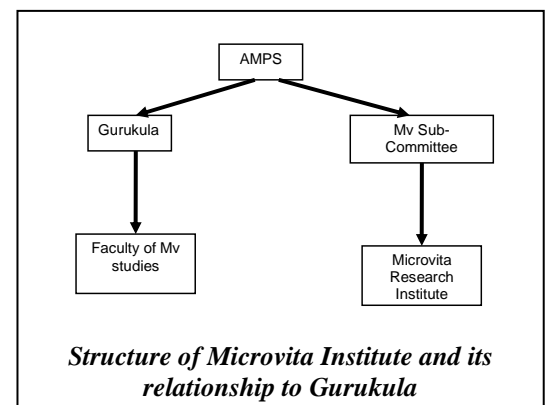
## Microvita Research Institute and AMGK Faculty of Microvita Studies

Plans are underway for the establishment of a Microvita Research Institute for the purpose of fostering research, study, publications and applications of Microvita (Mv) science for the all-round well being of society. Dada Vimalananda and Dada Shambhushivananda met with each other at Madhu Karuna MG Quarters, during DMS in Berlin Sector and consolidated plans for a cooperative relationship between the Microvita Research Institute and Gurukula. Dada Vimalananda shared these plans with the gathering of 250 margiis who attended the Microvita presentation on this occasion. Students will be trained in Mv concepts through Gurukula's Faculty of Microvita Sciences. In the early stages of the development of both the Faculty and the Institute, the Faculty will be responsible for the teaching of Mv science and all the pedagogical issues associated with that role. The Institute will be responsible for setting research priorities while developing practical applications of Mv. The organizational association of the two bodies is illustrated in the diagram. Dada Vimalananda will be Dean of the Faculty of Mv Studies within Gurukula and he will be President of the Microvita Research Institute. He is also a member of the Mv Sub-committee.

### Research Projects of the Microvita Research Institute include

1. Mv and Health
2. Mv and Yoga Psychology
3. Mv and Plasma Research
4. Mv General Theory and Standard Model of Mv
5. Mv and Biological-Systems
6. Mv and Futures Studies

A Microvita Study and Research Workshop was held July 8 – 10, 2005 in St Petersburg, Florida, USA, to further the creation of the Microvita Research Institute's research program as well as to work out details of the cooperative relationship with Gurukula and to develop a microvita faculty within Gurukula. The weekend included a report on research completed by Dan Jones in which he changed one element into another; Michael Towsey gave a power point presentation on MV and related research paradigms and Dr. Ram Shettigar and Sid Jordan reviewed their plans for meditation research.





# CNS Sweden Bio-Psychology Intensive Seminar

Conducted by Dr. Richard Maxwell  
September 19-23, 2005

A Bio-psychology Intensive Seminar was conducted at CNS Sweden by Dr. Richard Maxwell from the USA. The 25 participants included six from Thailand and Norway. The overall goal of the seminar was to provide an understanding of basic physiology and to show that prevalent concepts in western science are consistent with the science of bio-psychology as explained by Shrii PR Sarkar. Implications of Shrii Sarkar's statements about physiology, particularly the pineal gland, were examined in depth. The central role of devotion in Ananda Marga practices was elaborated through quotes from Shrii Sarkar's discourses and demonstrated to correspond to brain systems that may be related to gurucakra. The week long program dealt with basic science of physiology, cakras, emotions, vrttis, sama'dhi and Ananda Marga practices. A more detailed outline of the program is included below:

## Monday

Basic science of the nervous system, endocrine system and immune system.

Basic science of the pineal gland.

## Tuesday

Basic Ananda Marga concepts of cakras, possible embryological links and relationships with the physiology of acupuncture.

Science-based answers to perturbing questions about cakras.

## Wednesday

Psychological theories of emotion.

Vrttis and their relationship to emotions and the brain.

## Thursday

Non-Ananda Marga theories of samadhi.

Ananda Marga's pineal theory of Samadhi, links with science, and the central role of devotion.

## Friday

Biopsychology of Ananda Marga practices: fasting, kiirtan, asanas, sadhana (pratyahara, dharana, dhyana and samadhi) and service.

Wrap up and open discussion



*Dr. Richard Maxwell specializes in clinical neuropsychology with a large part of his practice serving individuals with brain injuries or other neurological challenges. An active member of Ananda Marga since 1974, he has tried to bridge the gap between science and spirituality. His most recent scientific interest is in brain phenomena associated with ecstatic states arising from meditation. He has worked to translate aspects of tantric yoga philosophy and practices into a framework that has meaning and validity from the perspective of western science.*

*Dr. Maxwell can be reached at: [maxwells@twcny.rr.com](mailto:maxwells@twcny.rr.com)*



## CNS Sweden Theatre in Education (TIE) Workshop

Given by Vishva Shanti Ole Brekke

This two day workshop for potential neohumanist educators was held in August at CNS in Sweden and conducted by Vishva Shanti Ole Brekke, director of The Commedia School in Copenhagen. It is natural for teachers to want to expand their knowledge of ways to approach an educational situation.

The workshop was to introduce these future teachers to the process of using theatre in whatever teaching situation they might find themselves from toddlers to adults.

The workshop itself was designed to demonstrate that using a well planned theatrical model in approaching any educational theme will accomplish several educational objectives in one project. For the workshop, educational objectives were divided into five categories:

1) Knowledge, 2) Inquiry and problem solving skills, 3) Social skills, 4) Psycho-motor skills, and 5) Values.

The workshop introduced the participants to all five areas with special emphasis on social skills and psycho-motor skills. On evaluating the workshop at the close, the general consensus of the participants was that they appreciated getting to know one another in different ways and that it was also enjoyable to use their bodies actively during the entire process. New doors were opened when it was demonstrated that chemistry, mathematics and biology could be enjoyably approached by using theatre.

*More about The Commedia School programs including TIE (Theatre In Education) can be found on the web, [www.commediaschool.com](http://www.commediaschool.com) or by writing to [obrekke@commediaschool.com](mailto:obrekke@commediaschool.com). TIE became a part of The Commedia School's program in 1991 and has since been offered to groups, universities and other educational institutions in South America, North America, and Europe.*

## Ydrefors Study Circle(YSC) a service activity of CNS-Sweden Social Ethics in a Multicultural World in Ydrefors

Led by Professor Agnetta Ottander



Professor Agnetta Ottander led a Ydrefors Study Circle (YSC) session on Social Ethics in a Multicultural World in Ydrefors, Sweden. Ms. Ottander is a specialist on Voice, Speech and Oral Interpretation and associated with CNS-Sweden. YSC has attracted the attention of Swedish Citizens. Twenty-four participants joined the second session on Social Ethics and Yogic life Style held on August 7, 2005. An Addiction Prevention Centre sent eleven of its inmates to benefit from Ydrefors Study Circle.

## CNS Croatia



The second nation wide "My First Book" contest has started with an interview of the winners of the first contest on national TV. Posters have been sent to schools and workshops are offered in schools and libraries. The best 50 books made by children go on an exhibition tour at some libraries. Didi Anandarama has begun doing workshops in schools about "how to make your own book" and will be conducting similar workshops in some places in the coming weeks along with having an exhibition of the books. The picture shows "KUKU" - the creative learning club of CNS. Four children finished together one story book to warn children about mines still in the fields from the last war. This picture was taken at an exhibition of the books of children from the last contest "My

First Book" in Karlovac in a Youth Club. The exhibition is going on now to Zadar city and then to Rijeka. The ballet play 'The dance of toys' of the winning story book had its premier last week at the local theatre.

## CNS Asheville, USA

The Center of Neohumanist Studies (CNS) on the Asheville Master Unit (MU) has recently sponsored three lectures followed by workshops on Peace Movements, presented by Clare Hanrahan; Spiritual Cosmology, chaired by Basil Savitsky and Alternative Health, chaired by Cindy Sobering. For the fall we plan to pursue the format of a weekly CNS forum at our downtown Quest Center drawing on one of our themes: multipathic health care, neohumanist education, green economics, inner (spirituality) and outer (environmental) ecology and sustainable community. These weekly forums would be followed up by monthly workshop at the Master Unit Dome. This plan is part of a larger promotion and creation of an ongoing seminar program for the CNS which would be given at the Quest Center, the MU, in cities throughout the region and on line (distance learning).

This CNS activity is expected to become a full time schedule in the next year when the second dome, which is under construction now, is completed in the summer of 2006. This second dome will add 4,000 square feet of space including meeting rooms, dorm rooms, kitchen, dinning room and baths to accommodate 50 people. The existing dome, for meditation, will be connected to this new dome by a vestibule. The recent addition of 100 acres to the MU creates the opportunity to develop a long term plan for a larger campus for the CNS that will provide additional educational programs and structures, including a complex of buildings to house the Gurukula offices, libraries, classrooms and overnight facilities. The MU also now has the potential for developing approximately 150 acres as a comprehensive MU with agriculture, animal husbandry, cooperatives, ponds, and a nearby cooperative community of members of Ananda Marga. This gives us the opportunity to develop a sustainable community design that integrates MU, individuals and families. We will have a CNS meeting at the MU on November 11 through the 14 which will focus on Sustainable Communities and CNS development of a Gurukula University.



*Meadow on the new 100 acres with great agricultural and building potential*

# Studies in Sustainable Living

## A Bridge to a Bright Future for Humanity and the Earth

*Ananda Marga Gurukula supports the building of a global network of Master Units as the foundation of a universal and sustainable society, through research and education in all related areas. This new section of the Gurukula Network newsletter will be devoted to education about sustainable communities, agriculture, and economies. The focus will be on models of sustainable communities, including eco-villages and master units (Shrii P.R. Sarkar's model to concretize a comprehensive sustainable community) which are helping us move together towards a brighter future for humanity and the planet Earth. The urgency of the current planetary crisis calls for a comprehensive plan for sustainability that not only acts locally through bioregional approaches, but acts globally to reduce violence to the environment and its people. Affordable oil resources are diminishing and the lower socioeconomic classes are increasingly disenfranchised. We must build a future that ensures equitable and proper utilization of all of our physical, mental, and spiritual resources. The greatest hope for replacing the current monopolistic / multinational economies, which are fossil fuel dependent, is the movement towards sustainable communities, self sufficient local economies and alternative energy. For sustainability at a global level we need a world government that controls violence, disease and environmental degradation while promoting an economy that serves the general welfare at the local and global levels. What follows in this issue are some introductory articles: one that applies Shrii Sarkar's socioeconomic model of PROUT to sustainable communities, another that looks at family life and intentional communities, and a brief report on some innovative projects. In future issues we will have articles that focus on "Comprehensive Sustainability" and "Sustainable Agriculture". We invite your suggestions and participation through articles on sustainable development and information on existing projects.*

## A Call to Action – By Ac. Vishvamitra

The next stage of human evolution is to learn to live together harmoniously and productively. We as a human society have been aware of an environmental and planetary crisis of gigantic proportions for the last few decades. Environmental upheavals and the mostly human induced crises of global warming, pollution, deforestation and ethnic violence consume the headlines. Opinions of scientists, politicians, religious leaders and common folk run the gamut from "we are doomed" to "the future of humanity is bright". The latter opinion was elaborated by P.R. Sarkar in his book, *The Liberation of the Intellect: Neohumanism*. Sarkar went on to say that we have passed through a very dark period in human history and that we have now crossed over a threshold into a new era, into a period of light in which a "new wave" of thought is being manifest. This "new wave" of thought is elevating the "humanist" value of love of humanity to the "neohumanist" value of love of all beings, animate and inanimate. This neohumanist love or devotional sentiment towards all beings recognizes the unity of all. It is this devotional sentiment that Sarkar posits as necessary for real progress simultaneously on the physical, psychic, social and spiritual planes.

To embrace this positive prophecy of a bright future for all and adopt its universal values begs of us, not only a first step of thinking positively about our future, but truly owning a conviction to and determination for a sustainable future. Sustainability in this new "era of light" must be comprehensive. We must achieve a balance on physical, mental, social, economic and spiritual levels. Buddha's exhortation to "be the light you want to see in the world" is a starting point. If you decide to choose life/love over death and a dismal future, that's when the hard work begins. We are at this crossroad now and everyone will choose, each moment of their lives, consciously or unconsciously, the path of darkness or of light. What are we each choosing right now? Can we embrace the responsibility that comes with choosing life? Can we express the gifts that we all have to offer or will we choose avoidance of our competence and suppress the sublime within us? We are witnessing widespread suffering produced by human-directed destruction of the environment and a hegemonism that fuels ill distributed wealth and violence. If we don't develop the needed coordinated cooperation within the next few decades we are threatened with drowning in our own waste and competitive conflicts.

Sarkar's neohumanist philosophy counters this threat and pessimism by recognizing a new wave of universal thought in the human mind espousing the love of all created beings. He states that this wave of neohumanist thought is moving in ever-increasing circles and offers the choice of a cooperative and sustainable society in a new era of light. Sarkar encourages us to join this neohumanist philosophy and blueprint for action with like-minded approaches to achieve our common goals for the general welfare of all, including plants, animals and the inanimate world. Let us move together towards this bright new future acting globally and locally as the world grows smaller every day, remembering that small positive efforts on the part of individuals can produce great results.

# PROUT's Vision of Sustainability

By Ramesh Bjonnes

Sustainability has become a household word today. Bureaucrats in the World Bank promote sustainable development in the third world. Organic farmers describe their practices as sustainable agriculture. Socially responsible entrepreneurs proclaim that sustainable business will save the world. Even some followers of P. R. Sarkar's socio-economic theory PROUT (Progressive Utilization Theory) have joined the chorus and sometimes refer to it as "sustainable economics." So what does sustainability mean, and where did the concept originate?

## What is Sustainability?

The word sustainability refers to a system of agriculture or business that, ideally, does not harm the environment in its pursuit of growth. To industrial ecologist William McDonough, sustainability refers to a "closed loop" or "cradle to cradle" business in which all the effluent waste is recycled back into the production process. In other words, an industrial system that mirrors the way nature works.

Historically, it was the United Nations that first started using the term sustainable development. The influential, UN sponsored Brundtland Report, issued in 1987, declared that the answer to our environmental and economic problems is "sustainable development." Since then, sustainable development has come to mean different things to different people--from organic farming to fair trade, from small businesses that recycle their waste paper to large, polluting corporations who want to show the world they have "green" intentions.

## Unsustainable Development

Dole is a good example of the last category business. With \$5.1 billion in revenues, Dole is the world's largest producer and marketer of conventional fruit and vegetables. Dole is also the world's largest user of pesticides and chemical fertilizers. Dole is therefore not exactly a sustainable company. According to Sharon Hayes, Dole's director of environmental affairs, however, the company has a "commitment to environmental leadership and consumer choice."

What Hayes refers to is that Dole has a "sustainable branch" that grows organic bananas and other fruits. But many environmentalists call this "green washing." That is, Dole has no real intention of becoming a sustainable company, it simply wants to

capitalize on the highly profitable market of organic foods. Thus the irony: while Dole's organic bananas are eaten by health conscious Americans driving gas guzzling SUV's, the workers in Peru and Ecuador growing these fruits do not even make a living wage.

Dole is not alone in showing its "green face" these days. Many multinational corporations have similar campaigns. One may argue that these incremental steps toward sustainability are favourable. But in reality, the sustainable development practices among corporations today are, for the most part, not very sustainable, neither environmentally nor economically. The main reason for this is that it is profit (the bottom line), not sustainability (the second bottom line), that drives the growth of these corporations.

Almost two decades after the Brundtland Report--as both material and spiritual poverty has increased dramatically--it is clear that deeper solutions are needed. Indeed, many critics maintain that the current sustainable development model maintains many of the fatal flaws of the neo-liberal or capitalist development paradigm itself. In other words, sustainable development promoted by corporations and by rich western nations has not been able to deliver its much touted promise of a healthier environment and a more equitable economy. In fact, we are in many ways much worse off today than in 1987.

## Green Sustainability

Because of capitalism's apparent failures, many environmental activists and thinkers such as Paul Hawken, David Korten and Lester Brown have realized the need to move away from a purely capitalist and materialist economy. Paul Hawken has thus developed what he calls "natural capitalism." David Korten has advanced a new

economic model he terms “people centred economics.” Lester Brown is a spokesperson for a new “eco-economy.”

All of these models have much in common, including decentralized economics, green taxes, economic equity, etc. What they also have in common is that they want to reform rather than replace the capitalist model. They do not offer a new economic paradigm. Despite their many progressive and well meaning facets, all of the new sustainability models operate within the framework of capitalism. But can sustainable capitalism really be sustainable?

## PROUT and Sustainability

From a PROUT perspective even these idealistic sustainable models will inevitably confront capitalism’s inherent contradiction: that self-interest and profit are the main drives of the economy and also the main causes of economic exploitation and environmental degradation. Sarkar explains: “The contradictions in capitalism are due to the self-centred profit motivated psychology and the accumulation of wealth for the benefit of a few rather than for the welfare of all. Hence, capitalism is not congenial to the integrated growth of human progress.” In other words, in a capitalist economy, no matter how green, there will always be a tug of war between the bottom line (profit) and the second bottom line (sustainability). And the bottom line will always win.

Sarkar’s keen insight into this fundamental flaw of capitalism is the reason why PROUT advocates a radical restructuring of the entire economy. PROUT’s alternative to capitalist reform is its three-tiered structure—small private enterprises, worker owned cooperatives and enterprises owned by state, regional or municipal boards. The inherent problems of profit-motivated greed can thus be checked and balanced by limiting capitalism itself. In other words, without curbing the growth of private capitalism—which is driven by its profit-motivation--it will be impossible to maintain social, economic and environmental balance, no matter how “sustainable,” “green” or “natural” the economy is.

Cooperatives and large scale key-industries owned by the state are therefore the main engines of the

PROUT economy. PROUT is clearly committed to protecting the environment and supports “closed loop” business practices. Yet PROUT maintains that these ethical and environmental business habits are not enough. The economic structure itself must radically change to end exploitation of both humans and nature. This keen insight is one of many ways in which PROUT-theory can help in the creation of a more sustainable society.

To create a sustainable economy, the economy itself must be modelled after both human nature as well as the natural world. Thus, unlike capitalism - which grew out of the social Darwinist dictum of “the survival of the fittest” - the PROUT economy grew out of the realization that human society as well as the ecological order is based on both cooperation and self interest. Sarkar’s PROUT is thus holistic, integral, cooperative and ecological. It is an economy that supports and maintains the growth and balance of the larger whole as well as its individual members, whether people, animals or plants.

## A Few Sustainable Features of a PROUT Economy

**Neohumanism:** PROUT’s ecological vision is based on Neohumanism, which proclaims the existential rights of both animals and plants. According to this philosophy, we must redirect our selfish tendencies (which capitalism cultivates to its fullest extreme) toward the development of a deep sense of social equality. Neohumanism also hails that sustainable stewardship of the planet’s resources can best be realized through a spiritual kinship with all beings. The realization of our Cosmic Oneness with all beings must be the underlying dictum of a sustainable society. Without sustainable spirituality there can be no sustainable society.

**Progress:** True progress is that which leads to spiritual realization and emancipation. Economic and scientific progress is important, but such progress must not come at the expense of nature or the development of culture and spirituality. To PROUT, the role of material development is not just to create more wealth and goods, but to create a conducive environment for spiritual growth, recreation, art and culture. All of these activities

rate very high on the personal happiness curve and very low on the environmental destruction curve. Sustainability will thus be achieved when society's overall goal is spiritual rather than material growth.

**Prama:** In its optimum, ecological state, nature is in a state of dynamic equilibrium or prama. PROUT maintains that economics and science must strive towards dynamic equilibrium as well, rather than the false, capitalist notion of "linear and perpetual growth." In order to create a sustainable world, prama in the physical, mental and spiritual spheres must be established. That is, the interaction between science, politics, culture, economics and ecology must be in a state of dynamic equilibrium.

**Decentralization:** PROUT is not the only "green" theory that advocates economic decentralization and local self-sufficiency, as such an economy is much more benign to the environment. Yet PROUT offers a unique approach to decentralization. Based on the formation of socio-economic regions throughout the world, PROUT would decentralize society based on common economic problems and potentialities, ethnic similarities, common geographical features, common language and culture. Within each socio-economic region, which sometimes would cross national boundaries, there would be "block level planning." In other words, a bottom-up rather than a top-down approach to planning the relationship between economics, culture and natural resources. International products will be replaced with local products, energy use for transportation will go down, and pollution will be dramatically reduced.

**Production for consumption, not profit.** A consumption economy is an integral aspect of PROUT's decentralized economy and should not be confused with a profit-oriented consumer economy. A consumption economy is an economy where goods are produced as per people's needs. A consumer economy is an economy where goods are produced and sold solely for profit. Since the consumption economy's main goal is to satisfy basic human needs, it also provides the economic security needed for people's non-material sources of fulfilment—family, community, culture, and spirituality.

**Cooperative enterprises.** Coops are the cornerstone of the PROUT economy. The Darwinian notion that competition promoted the evolutionary survival of the fittest individual is outdated. New research reveals that evolutionary success had more to do with the survival of the fittest community through interwoven cooperation. Thus cooperation, not competition, must be the cornerstone of a more equitable and sustainable economy.

**Eco-villages:** Sarkar's "master units" or eco-villages will serve as micro-level experiments on how to integrate science, economy, culture, spirituality and ecology on both a local and global scale.

**Global vision and governance:** Decentralization, self-sufficiency, and smaller scale industries do not mean neglecting a global agenda. We need a global movement with at least three separate, yet integrated, goals. 1) A strengthening of the global polity through a gradual replacement of the UN with a global federation, or world-government that can safeguard the needs and rights of people and the environment. 2) The formation of self-sufficient, socio-economic regions of free and fair trade zones—that is, a global grid of sustainable and self-sufficient trading partners. 3) The development of a global movement rooted in a life-affirming vision of spirituality and oneness with all of creation.

## Conclusion

Sarkar's PROUT model urges us to move "beyond sustainable development" and natural capitalism toward a complete restructuring of the economy based on a spirit-centred vision of progress and economic prosperity. PROUT advocates a development model that is life-centred rather than matter-centred; one that grows from local communities, that is cooperative rather than competitive, one that shares wealth equitably, maintains harmony with the earth, protects local markets, vitalizes local cultures, and makes spirituality the defining context of progress.

*Ramesh Bjonnes has a degree in agronomy. He has authored numerous articles on sustainable development issues and is a regular columnist for a Norwegian daily newspaper.*

# Families and Intentional Communities

By Ac. Vishvamitra

As I begin to address the topic of families and intentional communities I realize how diverse and vast the experience is for individual families who have lived in intentional communities over the last few decades. Most families probably joined these communities with some thought of creating sustainability as part of their intentional design. I will address some of the generic issues for families living in intentional communities which include an array of interests and questions (spiritual practices, communication, ownership, housing, education, health care, employment etc.) that families and single people may pose. Hopefully this effort will throw further light on questions that families and designers of sustainable communities and ecovillages are interested in answering. This seems imminently important in that it is family life and its strong internal relationships and sense of community that contribute to sustaining community life.

## Spirituality

Spiritual worldview is the first concern of most people considering living in an intentional community. Sustainability is most dependent on what is permanent and most people consider spirit, love and compassion to be the only permanent or absolute legacy for all generations. Everything else is subject to the relative world of change. P. R. Shrii suggest that to adjust to both this absolute and relative world that we take the “subjective approach to an objective adjustment”, by combining internal subjective spiritual guidance with the more external objectivity of rationality and science. The formulation which the Danish Association of Ecovillages adopted as the purpose of ecovillages ten year ago was “restoring whole circulatory systems in people and nature on all levels”(Hildur Jackson 2002). Hildur Jackson goes on to say that this holistic purpose represents a way of unifying cultural/spiritual, social and ecological movements in a new worldview, analogous to the integration of different levels of the chakra system in the human body, and the four elements of earth, water, air and fire. This analogy of the inner ecology of the human system and the outer ecology of the environment and culture is consistent with the ten thousand year old spiritual wisdom of the tantric system of kundalini yoga.

For most families having this spiritual worldview which integrates all aspects of community life, expressed in daily spiritual practices (meditation, prayer, chanting, dancing and service to all) shared with others is at the heart of the motivation for participating in intentional communities. The models for integration of spirituality into intentional sustainable communities are as diverse as can be imagined. What is important is that there be respect for everyone’s approach to growing nearer their inner most spirit or self. The collective spiritual practice of compassionately serving each other, plants, animals or the inanimate world help lead us to an understanding of the divine nature in ourselves and all of creation. Will Keepin, the director of Satyana Institute in Colorado, states in his guidelines for spiritual activism that, “service work is enlightened self-interest, because it cultivates an expanded sense of self that includes all others” (Keepin 2002). Keepin concludes that the purpose of an ecovillage is to help each other realize our divine nature. Shared spiritual practices that emphasize development of our highest potential and social responsibility are a solid foundation for families to raise their children and thrive as social units with other like minded families and individuals.

## Strategic Planning

Planning for the development of an intentional community or ecovillage requires months of work involving all stakeholders (families and individuals interested in living in the community and all those relating to this community as well as those who may benefit from services provided by the community) in the planning process. There are many guides and resources for this process. It is helpful to visit many different intentional communities and call on experienced leaders of intentional communities to guide the process. Reading materials that have been helpful to many are “Ecovillage Living- Restoring the Earth and Her People” by Hildur Jackson and Karen Svensson (2002) and Strategic Planning for Public and Nonprofit Organizations” by John Bryson (1995).

## Ownership and Administration

The first issue many families encounter is private property versus cooperative ownership. The ideal value on the part of many universally minded individuals is that all property is the patrimony of all. However, families without ownership can’t get a bank loan nor have their children inherit their home. Cooperatives which own the land and structures can take an individual family’s monetary contribution towards community development or home construction and return it with interest at a fair market value should the family circumstances require leaving the community. The cooperative, for tax purposes, may have the family pay rent that becomes a measure of their investment should this investment be returned when they leave the community. Long term communities have an investment in allowing families to maintain a home for

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their children and extended family over generations. Many communities, such as Celo in western North Carolina, give 99 year leases to families to attempt to provide continuity for a sense of “home” for families.

Where I live, families wanted to live near the 44 acre Ananda Marga master unit (MU). After much deliberation, the yoga society, Ananda Marga Inc., decided to give families individual ownership rather than use the lease approach. The principal reason for this decision, by all parties involved, was that the master unit is owned by a highly centralized Ananda Marga organization which requires that monks or nuns (whole time workers - WT's) administer the MU property. The MU run by WT's provides a model of an alternative sustainable community to the surrounding local community and relies on hierarchical governance that takes advice from a board that includes family people but reserves the right for final decision making to WT's concerning all MU issues. Families agreed that decisions regarding the daily lives of their family members and the property they inhabited best remain with them and that final decisions regarding a WT run MU best remain with the WT's. The families were deeded separate property adjacent to the master unit where they could choose to participate directly in the daily development and maintenance of the MU, in exchange for their monetary investment in the development of the infrastructure of the MU. The families set up a Landholders (LH) Association for their small development, registered with the county in which they lived. The MU was registered as a tax exempt educational organization. The MU committee included members of families from the LH and likewise the LH included members of the MU committee. Cooperative arrangements between the two groups included shared environmental covenants, well and reservoir and road maintenance agreements as well shared ownership and maintenance of construction equipment and a truck.

Thus we see a combination of private ownership and cooperative arrangements. This allowed families to get bank loans for building their homes and decide independently on the fate of their ownership and inheritance. This avoided the confusion of joint decision making by a hierarchical organization of WT's and LH's. The down side to this hybrid of cooperative and private ownership and decision making model is that the individuality of life styles of families make more cooperative, efficient and sustainable living designs more difficult to develop.

We have since bought 100 acres for both families and the MU and we are going to attempt to have more of an ecovillage design that has families invest in a cooperative life style that may include cohousing and cluster housing where there is a flexible design that meets the needs of shared life styles of all ages. We are considering cooperative ownership of the family and singles cluster homes and cohousing on a portion of the land. Another part of the new land may be divided into two portions- one managed by monks and another by nuns. This still strains the total commitment to one unified cooperative sustainable community by having three different managements of non WT's (families and singles), WT monks and WT nuns even though they are all committed to the same ideology that espouses sustainable community. However, these complexities are similar to the real world divisions of public and private land; municipalities, counties and state government; rural and urban development. Perhaps such an arrangement puts us to the test to share the same goals for sustainable communities around different bioregional, cultural, social and political demands.

### Spiritual and Religious Orders and Families

The scenario for the Ananda Marga example of developing a sustainable community is unique in that it attempts to integrate the concept of a monastic society with a society of single and married individuals. As in all monastic societies the life style and hierarchical order creates different demands of discipline and mobility that are not consistent with family life. Thus we have two distinctly different cultures even though they may have the same overall socio-economic and spiritual ideology. Thus it was concluded that separate ownership and administration is required. One of my fellow members of Ananda Marga once asked the Shrii P. R. Sarkar, the president of Ananda Marga, if he and his family could go and live and work on the central MU at Ananda Nagar in India for a year. Shrii Sarkar's reply was “you and your family could go and live in a nearby village and work at Ananda Nagar”. Thus the separation of family life and the MU received impetus from the leader of the organization. However, it is important to note that Shrii Sarkar's central tenet of morality and decision making was that all things change based on time, place and person and that we should invoke collective decision making at the present moment in our personal and social history to guide us in all endeavors. This position avoids dogma and stagnation, thereby allowing collective decisions to adjust appropriately to the present circumstances. Shrii Sarkar encouraged love of all of creation, intensive study, rational mentality, social equality and the welfare of all as guiding principles in this collective decision making.

Traditionally, all the MU's around the globe have encouraged the model of families owning land or living near by the MU and contributing to the development of the MU. Some individuals have built homes and apartments on MU but they are owned by the MU and the families use them when they attend meetings, seminars and celebrations on the MU. Some

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individual family members and singles are given permission to live on the MU and work on special projects for limited periods of time. Traditionally only monks and nuns (WT's) and local full time workers (LFT's) live on the MU. The objectives of the MU are to create an environment conducive to spiritual self realization, self sufficiency and participatory management that lead to a fully integrated and ecologically balanced socio-economic unit that supports the welfare of all, including the surrounding community. These objectives seem compatible with the vision of most intentional sustainable communities. While there may be different legal entities within a sustainable intentional community they are united by a common purpose and ideological nucleus. The basis for a viable global movement of sustainable communities (ecovillages) is that their unity and organizational strength is dependent on common ideology while their overall designs (physical, socially, culturally and spiritually) may vary. This ideological nucleus makes unity in diversity possible.

### Community Gardens

It seems infinitely more efficient to share organic food production within a sustainable community. This can be designed within the community or if the land is large enough include those from the surrounding community in a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) or Subscription Sales (SS) design. These models are natural matches for families' food supply needs. Community canning, jarring and preserving of food as well as seed banks insure continuity of food supply. In communities that afford larger acreage families may want to be involved commercially for family income. Meeting this dual set of commercial and personal needs for a family further insures sustainability of food production for all. It also serves as a model of sustainability for the surrounding community.

### Decision Making

Guidelines for some of the decision making for families is entailed in the community covenants that may be filed as a document in the county courthouse with the deed to the land. For the families belonging to the land holder's association (LH) adjacent to the Ananda Marga MU there is an ecological covenant that encourages green building methods and life style, protecting people, plants and animals. We make decisions based on a majority vote with a quorum of the LH present. We avoided a consensus vote because of the experience of neighboring communities who warned us of the tyranny of one dissenting voter who obstructed their consensus approach for years. However, some communities avoid this problem by exercising a consensus minus one if one individual takes an unpopular position or obstructs without coming up with a compromise position. Decision making on the MU is also majority vote by the MU committee. Individuals are given specific offices (president, treasurer, secretary, etc) or committee duties decided upon by the larger committee of all members.

### Conflict Resolution

For conflicts that can't be settled by discussion in community meetings held monthly the covenants for the LH offers a protocol for conflict resolution between families or between families and the LH association. Two representatives from other families and one individual from outside the community agreed upon by the conflicted parties will hear the parties' complaint and give a decision for the solution of the conflict that parties must abide by. If conflicts are not settled amicably by this method then legal or counseling outside the community may be pursued. Regarding conflict resolution within families the community will provide support but not become involved as an organizational entity in mediation or counseling. Individuals in the community not officially representing the community may provide a mediation or counseling service for distressed families. External mediation and counseling for individual families is encouraged if the conflicts exceed the capability of the family and community support for resolving the issues. As cooperative communities develop it is hoped that a wide array of multipathic therapies for physical, emotional and social issues are made available in the community so that external resources for health care are not needed as much as the community becomes more self sufficient.

### Employment

It is desirable that many jobs, cooperatives and entrepreneurial businesses may be created in the community. Types of businesses related to self-sufficiency involve alternative health care as mentioned above, alternative energy, cooperatives creating natural products such as medicines, clothing, pottery, animal husbandry, and commercial agriculture. On the MU in Asheville, NC we are creating a seminar business to teach a wide variety of courses and workshops that include yoga, meditation, and sustainable approaches to community. We also rent space in our seminar center to like minded groups. All of these possibilities make it possible for those living in the community to work at home. This is particularly important for parents who wish to be near their children and conduct home schooling.

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## Cohousing

Having cohousing or cluster housing makes it possible for families to assist each other in raising one another's children. Children have many positive models to emulate in this situation. Social support and sharing of many duties is possible while still preserving the needed privacy for individual families. Celebrations, birthdays and many special occasions and holidays can be shared in a vibrant manner. Rituals for rites of passage become community events. Child care and elder care are rendered much more lovingly in the hands of multiple caretakers who share the duties, preventing the burn out of single care takers. Home schooling can also draw on the talents of many in the community. Another advantage of cohousing is that as the space requirements change during the family life cycle (children are born and leave home) the design of most cohousing offers different configurations of rooms and space that can be reconfigured to accommodate smaller or larger spaces. This has economic and maximum utilization implications for families and the community.

## Child Care

No matter what the intentional community's architectural plans, it is possible to share child care with others. This can be a barter, volunteer or paid arrangement. The fact is that heterogeneous communities with diverse populations provide the needed support for child care for families. Diverse communities also give the opportunity for senior citizens and children to interact in child care and school settings.

## Health Care

Developing multipathic health care alternatives in the community decreases costly doctors' visits. The production of herbal remedies in the community serves as a business and modality of health care. The focus becomes preventive health care for all members of the community emphasizing healthy life styles that include yoga, meditation, organic food, appropriate exercise programs and social support. Children are brought up in community that emphasizes healthy lifestyles and preventive medicine for everyone and this becomes second nature as they grow up and transfer this model to the next generation.

## Education

Education for all ages emphasizes the existential value and interconnectedness of all entities. Love and respect of all people, plants, animals and inanimate beings is modeled in communities composed of families who work in a practical and joyful manner for the welfare of all. Adult members of families are committed to a life of continued learning about how to improve themselves physically, mentally, emotionally, socially and spiritually- achieving a balance. Multigenerational education and programs involve all ages in learning to express compassion and caring for all ages, emphasizing the equal value of everyone in the community. Contact with all ages prepares us for coping successfully with the entire family life cycle, embracing birth, all developmental stages and death. Home schooling and the development of educational activities can become a service and/or a business for families in some instances. We need to differentiate charitable service where scholarships and free educational activities are provided versus education as a business. We may decide to provide a nursery, preschool, secondary education or even advanced adult education and university activity on campus and/or as a distance learning program. These schools could combine "service" and paid tuition to maintain the non-profit status and viability of its educational institutions.

## Communication

Connectivity should be assured through newsletters, phone trees, easy access to one another, knowing who to call for what and alternative communication systems in times of loss of normal services as in disasters or storm conditions. One of the great things for families about living in community is the accessibility of others you can depend on when you need them. The isolation and desperation that can occur in urban settings and single homes in rural settings is greatly reduced. Ease of contact and communication with other families returns us to the feeling of "extended family" that some of us grew up with in the 50's. The price of our mobility in the modern world has been isolation from this extended family. The new extended family is based on shared community and encourages the sense of relationship which is at the heart of sustainability of community. Communication systems are designed in sustainable communities to meet many different needs regarding shared task and transportation, as well as addressing individual and collective needs on a daily basis. Bulletin boards on line as well as in select shared spaces are useful. E-mail groups are created but the distinction is made between sharing information via e-mail versus the needed face to face communication needed for creative problem solving. Publication of flyers, brochures, magazines, newsletters, books and slide shows provides in-depth communication in the community as well as generating more interest and involvement of the general public. These publications could provide a business opportunity within the community as well as helpful tools for fund raising.

## Collective Meetings

1. Community Management- Large meetings with the entire community can be arranged quarterly for collective decision-making that affects the entire community. Organizational structure which has evolved out of a strategic planning process can guide the community on a daily basis. Smaller task-oriented groups (communications, newsletters, work parties etc.) can be standing or long-term depending on their objectives.

2. Celebrations- Families and individuals can evolve meaningful rituals for birthdays, coming of age, marriages, house-warming, baby naming, tree planting, laying corner stones for structures etc. Entertainment- Musical events, dances, drama, story telling and a variety of art and literature events that involve the members of the community can enliven community life.

Working on shared task whether it involves maintenance or creating something functional and aesthetically pleasing in the community generates the coordinated cooperation that brings joy and sustainability to communities.

## Culture

For individuals and families who have experienced some degree of alienation from self, others and the earth in an excessively materialistic society, sharing and creating a holistic and sustainable culture in community is the core of the healing process. It is not new medicine for what ails us but rather a reclaiming of the gifts of our venerable ancestors combined with our proper utilization of our present physical, mental and spiritual potentialities. The alchemy that guides this transformational process is being quiet, listening and becoming an instrument of this individual and collective spirit. The greatest challenge in this process is developing the humility to be vulnerable with others and finding the collective truth you share. The plains Indians of America use to say, regarding the council ring that guided their daily activity, “the truth lies at the center of the circle”. Shrii P. R. Sarkar states:

***“Society must ensure the maximum development of the collective body, collective mind and collective spirit. One must not forget that collective welfare lies in individuals and individual welfare lies in collectivity. The development of the collective mind is impossible without developing proper social awareness, encouraging the spirit of social service and awakening knowledge in every individual. So, inspired with the thought of the welfare of the collective mind, one has to promote the well-being of the individual mind. The absence of spiritual morality and spirituality in individuals will break the backbone of the collectivity. So, for the sake of collective welfare one will have to awaken spirituality in individuals. The potential for infinite physical, mental and spiritual development is inherent in every human being. This potentiality has to be harnessed and brought to fruition.” (Sarkar, 1992)***

As Shrii Sarkar entreats us, we must strive for a culture that balances caring for the individual and collective interest at all levels- physical, mental and spiritual.

We are witnessing an evolving global culture of ecovillages that integrate spiritual practice, science, decentralized economies, bioregionalism (Andruss 1990), universal education and supraesthetic art forms. As we stand on the precipice of a new era of light these bold experiments in sustainable communities help to show us what is possible for humanity’s next psychic and social evolutionary leap- learning to live together for the benefit of all.

Ac. Vishvamitra, family acarya in Ananda Marga and author this article, has lived on the Ananda Marga master unit (MU) for the last 11 years and served as one of its founders and developers along with other members of Ananda Marga. The original 44 acres of land was bought in 1990 and now is expanded to approximately 150 acres. He has lived there with his 94 year mother for the last 4 years in a newly built home as part of a 17 acres Raven Ridge Landholders Assn. which contains 5 families living on private land next to the MU. His house has served as the “Inn” for his extended family (3 children; 6 grandchildren), the international margii community and others interested in the MU. There are two homes on the MU proper, one housing monks and the other a rental home. There is a geodesic dome which serves as a meditation and seminar hall where we have regional retreats and workshops. Currently a second three story dome (4,000 square feet) is being built to provide kitchen, dining room, meeting rooms, office and dormitory space for 50 people. This addition will greatly enhance the developing seminar center (Center for Neohumanist Studies) and retreat capacity. The next step is the development of a 150 acre sustainable MU community that integrates the MU, families and individuals living and working together in a cooperative community. We are in the early planning stages at this point and encourage interested individuals and families who want to live in a cooperative intentional community to contact us at:

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## Supporting Innovative Efforts Towards Sustainable Development

### Horticultural Therapy Centre in Boise

Boise Tree House Horticulture Therapy and Education Center Project is an experiential hands-on, educational plant based activities center located on 5 acres of land called Ananda Madhura' and located in Eagle, Idaho. The centre includes Square Foot gardening, Sensory gardens, Native American Waffle Gardens, Simulated Rain Forest, Cactus Station, Plants from Dinosaur Age-Living Fossils, Reptiles Green House and House of Medicinal Plants (Herb Garden).

Horticulture Therapy utilizes plants and horticultural activities to promote mental, physical, and social well-being. Participating in horticulture therapy is relaxing, lowers stress levels, promotes social interaction and improves motor skills. As an educational tool, hands on learning with plants provides a connection that awakens deep, natural feelings of hope and promotes a sense of responsibility for all that is living in our environments.



*Dada Shambhushivananda visited this Center and conducted a tree planting ceremony.*



### Personal Electric Transports (PET)

Dada Shambhushivananda spoke before the Board of Water and Power Commissioners of Los Angeles defending the PET project led by Tony Lochirrichio. They had given \$2 million dollars to initiate this project in LA. The electric vehicles project has many uses in developing countries also including Tsunami victims.

PET has agreed to donate 30 vehicles to AMGK Model Schools in order to create greater awareness of non-polluting technologies as a part of our Environmental Education Initiatives.

#### *Free Electric Vehicles for NHE Schools and Projects*

Dada Shambhushivananda and Tony Lochirrichio of Personal Electric Transports have come up with a "World Wide, Clean Energy, Hands On Clean Energy Education Program" that any NHE related Schools or Projects may apply to participate in. The project in summary will provide an Electric Vehicle at no charge (excepting shipping and batteries) to a number of schools or projects to be used as a key part of an accompanying free computer education program which will have as its educational goal training students to understand the need for light duty electric transportation to attack the rate of global warming worldwide. The project will also teach the students how to maintain and repair their electric vehicles. It will also provide a basis for fund raising for the school or project in the second phase of the program if the individual schools choose to participate in the fundraising program. If you would like to participate in this program, please write to:

<amgk.glo@gurukul.edu>



# Teaching English at the Ananda Marga Kindergarten in Albania

by Dada Vedaprajinananda

On September 1st, the Ananda Marga kindergarten in Albania started its sixth year of operation. We have full attendance, 65 children, aged four through six, distributed in three classrooms. A celebration marking the completion of five successful years for the kindergarten was held on October 3rd.



During the past years we have concentrated on improving the instruction of English to the children and for the teachers as well. When I first started in October 2000 our only teacher was hardly able to speak any English. I started an after-school English class attended by the teacher and others in the community. My English classes have continued for the first five years, and now our three teachers are not only fluent in English, but are enthusiastic in teaching English to the children.

We use English songs from the “Circle of Love” as one way of introducing the children to the English language. During the first week of September when the current term began, I asked the head teacher whether I should come and start singing with the kids again, as I normally do. She said, “Wait till we teach the new children the songs.” I came in one week later with my guitar and the children were able to sing four songs very nicely. They pick up the songs very fast. All the song sessions finish with “Baba Nam Kevalam” mantra singing and meditation.

When they finish meditating, the children usually recite some of their new English vocabulary. A few years ago someone in England sent us some animal picture cards. I often hold up the pictures and the kids call out “sheep”, “frog”, “dog”, “cat” as the pictures are pulled out of the box. Last week they started counting in English, “one,” “two”, “three” “four” and when they started going past ten, I stopped them, because for only one week of school they had already done quite well.

In addition to counting, the teachers give instruction in basic vocabulary such as household items, food items, etc. Some of the vocabulary is combined with mudras from the Circle of Love: such as tree, flower, sun, everyone, God.

This year we hope to go further with the English instruction using teaching materials that were donated to us by the website <[www.GenkiEnglish.com](http://www.GenkiEnglish.com)> . This website is the brainchild of Richard Graham, an English instructor in Japan who has devised a unique method of instruction that uses songs and dance-like movements. The movements are shown on a video CD, and the songs are available on audio CDs. We started using this method during the closing weeks of last year’s session and the results were very encouraging.

To make it easier for the teachers to use these materials, we just added a computer room to the school. We are about to install computers which will not only be available for use by the teachers, but will be part of a computer education course for people of the surrounding neighbourhood, almost all of whom cannot afford to have their own personal computers.



# Namaskar School is Changing

By Erin Fudge

Namaskar School is an International Neohumanist Primary School in Ejura, Ghana

*Erin Fudge was a volunteer at the Neohumanist School in Ejura for four months. This article was written in June, 2005.*



For over two months I have been volunteer teaching at the International Neohumanist School in Ejura, Ghana. Prior to coming here, I researched Neohumanism and the education system it stresses. I was particularly attracted, and continue to be, to the emphasis Neohumanism places on the education of young children. I was excited to take part in the project of influencing and educating the minds of younger students. It has proved to be as valuable and enjoyable an experience as I imagined it would be. However, back in Canada, I could never have imagined the problems and hurdles of the education system here in Ghana. We face problems with the attendance of students who, some of the time, are needed to work in the home instead of going to school. We face problems with students not being able to afford pencils and notebooks. We face problems with lack of government assistance. For example, students do not receive adequate textbooks. We face disciplinary problems, as beating is culturally acceptable in many homes and many schools. We also, along with many other schools in the area, face problems with the dedication and motivation of the teachers. These problems surface themselves in many ways on a daily basis but do not deter us from continuing on to the best of our ability. Already, in only two months, I have seen many positive changes.

One of the bases of Neohumanist thought is that we are on a continuum from imperfection to perfection. Recently, at the International Neohumanist Primary School in Ejura, Ghana we have made many changes that we feel have helped move us along this continuum. Renovations, aesthetic additions and changes in disciplinary actions are proving to have a positive influence on students, teachers and the international volunteers. We hope these changes will not only encourage us to achieve our Neohumanist principles but we hope they can encourage other schools to do so as well.

Under the leadership of Dada Shivesh, Dada Haranath and international volunteers, beating as a form of discipline has been permanently banned from the school. The decision to implement the ban was discussed at a recent PTA meeting and was accepted by the parents. The process of eliminating beating was a slow and difficult process; one that is still not entirely complete. Although beating is no longer practiced at the school, there remain a few problems. It is very difficult to discipline the children with different strategies once they are accustomed to beating. This makes it a challenge for the teachers to maintain self-control and control of the class simultaneously. We are confident that our new forms of discipline will be both effective and will help promote conflict resolution and self control among the children. Already we have seen improvements in the behaviour of teachers and we are excited to see that these changes are being passed along to the students.



If you saw the International Neohumanist School (or Namaskar School as it is locally referred to) four months ago, you may not recognize it now. Construction began four months ago and is now almost complete. These new developments do not only affect the physical appearance of the school. They are part of

Dada Shivesh's strategy to improve the student's learning, concentration and health. The most obvious new addition to Namaskar is the three new classrooms. We feel that these classrooms will not only better accommodate the growing number of students at the school but will also allow for a better student to teacher ratio. Our Kindergarten and P2 classes are large; each consisting of over 40 students. Prior to construction these students shared one room and one teacher. It is our goal to remove the weaker students from these classes and place them in a class where their learning can be better monitored and attended to. The benefits of these new classrooms are many. We strongly believe that aggressive behaviour among the children during class will also diminish, making our new forms of discipline easier to employ. We feel that the impact on learning for the students, especially the weaker ones, will be immense.

Another new constructional development is a fence that spans the perimeter of the school. Again, we feel the benefits of the fence are many. Prior to its construction, the students and teachers faced disruptions from local food vendors and other passers by. To an outsider, a problem with food vendors may seem a little strange. Many of our students come from farming families where parents are not around during the day. Thus, the parents will give their children sufficient money to buy food everyday- including the food we provide at our own canteen. This makes our students a very attractive customer to the local food vendors. These vendors station themselves next to our school and do not mind interrupting class to make a sale through the window. The fence has been 100% effective in resolving these unnecessary intrusions and interruptions. Improved attention and concentration of both the students and the teachers have already been observed. Another problem we faced prior to the fence was the disappearance of students during break time. The fence is proving to be very successful in mending this problem as well.

Toilettes are another new addition to Namaskar School. In the past the students were forced to go home to use the toilets and many would often go on school property. This was an obvious sanitation issue and we are pleased to now be getting it under control.

We here at Namaskar School believe that art is an integral part of the curriculum. Our students love art class and international teachers enjoy giving them despite the challenges of controlling the children's excitement and eagerness. Canadian volunteer Kate MacLennan accentuates our appreciation of art and in particular, the children's art in a new mural that surrounds the school. Kate examined students' artwork to look for common themes and then incorporated these themes and specific drawings into the mural. The result is a colourful celebration of the children's aesthetic and creative visions. Also, the combination of people, plants, stars and animals within the mural demonstrates the Neohumanist principle of interconnectedness. It is our hope that the mural will encourage the students' love of art and give them freedom and confidence to be creative both in class and their daily lives.



Kate is not the only volunteer going out of their way to create a positive and practical learning environment. Belgian volunteer Geraldine Mabbe observed an enjoyment amongst our students to read and improve their reading skills. Unfortunately, reading resources were modest at the school and virtually non-existent in most of our students' homes. Geraldine felt that a library would be the perfect system to nourish the love of reading and books she saw in the children. The library has just recently opened and already holds approximately 200 books that have been donated by volunteers. The books are organized by reading level and are accessible to all children in the community, not only those attending Namaskar School. Every child using the library will receive a membership card that monitors how many books they have read and when the books are due back. We are hopeful that this system will not only encourage the children to read more and develop their reading skills but will also promote skills of responsibility and organization, which we deem very important.

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# New Dawn School Brazzaville, Congo

By Dada Sarvajitananda

The Ananda Marga school in Congo is now entering into its third year. Republic of Congo is a small country in Central Africa; it has the size of Germany but only three million inhabitants, neighbouring Democratic Republic of Congo (former Zaire). Like its neighbour it is a country rich in oil and gold and diamonds, but unfortunately all its wealth does not benefit the citizens, rather it is the oil and the diamonds that is the cause for so many wars and destruction in that area.



Even 20 years ago, Congo had a high literacy rate and a good public schooling system. Then in the end of the nineties the country suffered two wars, which the media call civil wars, but actually these were imported wars fighting for the control of oil and gold resources. Now the country is in ruins, roads and houses are broken, the whole infrastructure is damaged and very little reconstruction work is happening. The country seems forgotten by the world and abandoned by its own government. Even the agriculture is down, because there are almost no roads to transport the products to the cities. There are almost no industries. Just now the Chinese are repairing the local cement factory. How can you rebuild the houses when each sack of cement has to be imported, not to talk about other industries? And even though the country relies completely on imports, the road from the main harbour town of Pointe Noire to the capital of Brazzaville is not repaired and everything has to be brought by local plane or sometimes on a train which is getting assaulted so many times by rebels, who actually supported or constituted the former elected government.

When visiting the public schools we saw with our own eyes what you would not believe: 200 children in one class with one teacher, no tables, no chairs, the roof is leaking and the toilets are broken. But still when we would ask the director what help would you like to receive for your children they would request us to do a feeding programme, because many children are undernourished. This is the situation of about 20 public primary schools with about 2000 children in each school in the capital of Brazzaville. The teachers are working with much idealism and sincerity, but they are overwhelmed by the situation and have nobody to turn to. It is a whole generation of the country which is getting neglected and pushed into a chaotic future. But still how much hope and joy of life was pouring on us, when we entered the overfilled and dark class rooms, which have the beauty of a prison camp. It is very touching and gives us hope and the responsibility to do something for these forgotten children in a forgotten country. (In 2004 the USDA was feeding around 160,000 children in the whole country regularly, but due to the election in the USA the shipments in 2004 were delayed, on top the transport problems inside the country which I mentioned above, so as a result this year they started their programme six months late and could feed only less than half.)



*School Feeding Program*



Our Ananda Marga school started in September 2003 with 65 children the first year. In the last moment before opening we had to change our sign board from School of Rising Sun to New Dawn School, because the rising sun is the symbol of the political opposition and it could get us into real trouble. Even then we had some considerable problems with the local police and had to spend some money on them and their arbitrary demands. Finally at the end of the school year the ministry of education told us that the local police had no right to interfere into the internal affairs of the school, but that advice came very late.

The parents were hesitant in the beginning because in the same building a year before a school had opened and closed in the middle of the term, but finally we gained their confidence and we hope that this year the attendance will increase. It is very hard for the parents to pay the school fee of \$5 per month (which is much cheaper than any other school with comparable quality would charge), but we are living in the city and we cannot do the school for free; then we will have 300 children in one class. We are not very strict in collecting the school fee, which means we are not throwing the children out if their parents are not paying and we are suffering for that. But the parents are very much appreciative of our service and they understand that the spirit is very different in our school. In the parents' meeting they do express their thankfulness.

We have a long way to go for improving the quality of education. All our teachers are practising yoga and meditation, so at least we can be sure they have a loving mind and a balanced behaviour. You know that singing and dancing is very popular in Congo and our children love kiirtan and learn also many songs in school and you can be sure that the spirit of neohumanism is vibrating in the classrooms.

It may seem only like a drop in the ocean, but we are giving our best and hope to improve and increase our service work, as you know one drop may be the beginning of a big rain and flooding the whole earth with love.

*For more information please contact Dada Sarvajitananda at <sarva@gmx.net>. Donations for this project are welcome through AMURT Germany. For details please write to Dada.*



*School Children with Dada Dayashiilananda and Dada Sarvajitananda*

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***Continued from Page 27 Namaskar School is Changing***

So, step by step we are making progress. We do not expect overnight success. Myself and other international volunteers who come to Ejura will continue to work hard in contributing to this progress along with Dada Haranath and Dada Shivesh. The school is not without its problems. A persistent and critical problem remains in acquiring a well-qualified and dedicated permanent staff. However, the construction, the mural and the library are very important additions to Namaskar School and we hope the changes continue to come. For, it is through these changes that we will better be able to apply the Circle of Love curriculum to our students. And it is through these changes that we better our ability to develop knowledgeable and active human beings.

Update on

## Lotus Centre and School Ulan Bator, Mongolia

The Lotus Children's Centre now cares for 140 children, and the Lotus School is now in its second year of running. The School educates 80 of the Lotus Children, from kindergarten to grade 4 (ages 3 to 12). The school at the moment has a total of 99 children. It is entirely supported by volunteers. Maria from England is the present head-teacher and the school pays special attention to physically and psychologically disadvantaged children. The staff spent all summer renovating the new school building and preparing for the school year. We now have two beautiful school buildings for the children. Class sizes are very small, as our children need a lot of extra attention due to their difficult life experiences. The biggest class has only 15 students, and the smallest has 6. We have also accepted our first student from outside the children's home.

The school is now developing on many levels: we are attempting to introduce new education and behaviour control methods, a very attractive school uniform based on traditional Mongolian clothes design has been introduced; and much to the happiness of the students, the basketball court is now being built! The special needs class, for students with mental disabilities or behavioural and learning problems has also been a resounding success.

The teenage girls have been learning traditional Mongolian crafts, including sewing and felt making. They have also been learning house renovation skills. We hope this will prove to be a useful practical skill for their future.

We hope the developments taking place at that Lotus School will positively benefit the children's behaviour and awareness in all areas of their lives.

The Lotus Centre has now extended its activities into a city outside of Ulan Bator, Erdenet. Until now there was no facility dedicated to caring for street children. The first children are now living at the Erdenet Centre.

**For more information:** <http://www.lotuschild.org>



*Children in Mongolian style uniform in red and black. For the home children, the uniform helps the children differentiate between the informal home environment and more formal school environment.*



*Lotus school children at the International Peace Day in Ulan Bator*



*Kulapati discusses the progress of Lotus School with Didi Ananda Kalika*



*At the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Lotus Project in Ulan Bator*

# The Child is Precious

## Cosmic Academy

### Neohumanist Children's Centre

Accra, Ghana, West Africa



The Cosmic Academy is an early childhood development centre located on the outskirts of the capital city of Ghana, West Africa. The academy was established by Jayaliila, a Ghanaian member of Ananda Marga. Her love for children inspired her to open a centre where children would be treated as the precious beings that they are and where the values of Neohumanism could be implemented. A loving donation by a volunteer provided the necessary funds to found the centre. Since its birth, Cosmic Academy has been operating for over 2 years now.

The Cosmic Academy is creating a focus on the child being the centre of the learning process. Traditionally families in Ghana contain a large number of children. Children help to maintain the household and community. They play a key role in the distribution of labour and help ease the work load for the family. It is not unusual for children to be born in quick succession with one another. This leaves less time for individual care and attention. The Cosmic Academy is striving to give each child the attention and esteem that they deserve. Through subtle direction the children acquire their individual and unique processes of learning and development. They are given the opportunity to explore the talents that are within them.



Throughout Ghana, the educational institutions are still mostly governed by colonial educative structures. In such systems the growth of the child is limited and there is little room for neither creative expression nor learning through play. At Cosmic Academy, the basic early childhood skills, such as colours, alphabet, numbers, shapes, etc are incorporated through various activities in which the children are engaged and involved in the learning process.



Field trips are used to introduce exploratory environments and bring the learning arena to real life.

It is easily agreed that all children are a precious creation. In childhood the learning acquisition is rapid yet has a lifelong effect. The Cosmic Academy is making the most of these formative years. The Cosmic Academy is where the child can thrive on the teachings of universal love within their own precious beings.

To learn more about Cosmic Academy, please visit:  
[www.kidsworldwide.org/ghanacosmic.htm](http://www.kidsworldwide.org/ghanacosmic.htm)

# NHE Conference Taipei, Taiwan September 10-11

By Didi Sananda, DSL Taipei



Taiwan is right now in the season of hurricanes. When the hurricane comes, the government announces an emergency and everyone stays at home. And in Taiwan, a place where people work very hard and long hours, it becomes a welcomed extra holiday. This time the hurricane chose to come during our NHE conference, so two days became one day, and we tried to utilize this one day together as much as possible.

The morning workshop was given by Abha who is originally from the Philippines and has been living in Taiwan for the last three years. She has worked in the field of education for over twenty years. The workshop was called *The Journey of Cultural Subjects towards a Universal Sentiment*. She presented different materials that she has been developing over the past three years; she is influenced by the Montessori way of teaching and is combining ideas into new exciting material. One of her ideas is the timeline which gives the children an understanding of the relationships in time, place and person. It is one very long piece of paper that you spread out on the floor and the children are given cards to match different seasons, persons, dresses, and so it gives them a clear understanding of the relationships in time.



The afternoon followed with a class given by Yatindra, principal of the Sarkar school. The Sarkar School is our elementary school in the south of Taiwan. They have recently moved into a new place which is exceptionally beautiful with high quality and standards. The setting for the school is ideal, right close to nature with scope for many activities. Yatindra gave an interesting class about a practical approach to discipline and how to bring Yama and Niyama and discipline into the classroom. The day ended with a brainstorming session and discussions on how to continue communication between NHE educators in Taiwan. We decided to hold an NHE Conference every six months and also to start a blog on the web so we can more easily share information through the internet. So, hurricane or not, we had an inspiring day together and left filled with hope for the future.

# Education Training Camp Madhu Karuna, Germany July 25-26

The two day Berlin Sector ETC at Madhu Karuna was organized by Didi Ananda Bhadra and was well attended by 30 participants. There were four NHE workshops. The first workshop, *Neohumanist Education for All*, was a power point presentation by Didi Anandarama outlining Ananda Marga Gurukula and Neohumanist Education. The second workshop, *Observing Young Children: Surprising and Powerful*, was presented by Ruai Gregory, an early childhood professor from the USA. Didi Ananda Laghima presented the third workshop on the *Management and Administration of Neohumanist Schools* and Svarna Vukusic from Croatia gave a workshop on *Gifted Children*. The evening programs were a *Creative Games* workshop led by Dada Maheshvarananda the first evening, and a collective *AMGK NHE meeting* the second evening co-chaired by Didi Anandarama and Arete Brim from the USA, with Kulapati, Dada Shambhushivananda in attendance as well. Notes from the *Neohumanist Education for All* power point presentation are included in this issue of Gurukula Network.



## Progressive School of Long Island

*The Progressive School of Long Island, established 1985, now has 128 students in Grades K-8. The following article is excerpted from an interview conducted by Didi Anandarama on July 9, 2005 with Eric Jacobson, the director. For more information on PSOLI, please visit <[www.psoli.com](http://www.psoli.com)>*

### SPIRIT ASSEMBLY

We discovered that the students in this school benefited from appreciating what's special about this school. In our Spirit Assembly we take one unique aspect of our school and highlight it. It is like cheerleading without standing up and waving the pompoms; that's why we called it the Spirit Assembly. After we choose an aspect of the school to emphasize and experiment with, we talk about it and bring it up in our shows, our discussions, our songs and music. At the end of every month we have a Spirit Assembly. It is held in the morning with all children during an extended Quiet Time session. In this way all come to appreciate and enjoy the specialty of the education that their parents and teachers are providing them with. So we celebrate the specialty of our school; that helps us grow. This enhances the collective spirit, enthusiasm and pride in the school.

The first Spirit Assembly was a story on the **life of P. R. Sarkar** as the founder and inspiration of PSOLI. We did a play acted out by the teachers, which the children really liked watching. It raised their appreciation that we have a great philosopher and a great philosophy behind the school. There were three parts to this story out of his life, one from his childhood, one from his youth and one from his older age. We adapted some ideas from his books and made fictional stories from his life based very closely on what he said in his books.

In the first scene he was sitting with a childhood friend near a well and talking to a frog in the well. The childhood friend asked him,

'What are you doing?'

'I am talking to the frog.'

'So well, what is the frog saying?'

And he said, 'the frog is saying that this well is the most beautiful well in the whole world, and there is no place better than this.' (All are laughing).

And then he wrote that *Tiny Green Island* song and taught it to them. It was just his childhood thing of being aware of what animals are saying.

The scene from his youth was when he was putting a question to a university professor and showing determination for his mission to make this place a better place to be. That is when he introduced the philosophy of Neohumanism. And the final stage was about him starting all these schools around the world. His idea was that through these schools you can change the mind of people and the young people are ready for it.

The next assembly was about **Paying Attention**. This was also this year's theme of the year. On this the children made a silent movie on a story about a child that did not pay attention. The movie was made with flashing light that made it appear like the old silent movies and the children acted it out in slow motion. In this way the topic was brought closer to the children. We were celebrating Paying Attention as a valuable quality of a person. We came to understand how valuable attention is, how everyone wants your attention and how nobody wants to give their attention. It is very hard to give attention. It is a very precious commodity. There are so many things people will do to get attention. The greatest gift you can give to someone is your attention.

Then we did a Spirit Assembly on Spanish. The children learn Spanish from an early age.

## THEME OF THE YEAR

The theme of the year goes for the whole of the year. With a theme we can introduce a topic and experiment with it for one whole year. In this way the experimentation stays within a large frame and parents who are somewhat conservative can follow it well. We see how the theme can be incorporated into our school; something we learn every year.

We had many different themes, some were:

- service
- decorum
- unity
- paying attention
- vocabulary
- your PATH (positive action and thinking)
- how to be positive no matter what the circumstances
- ecology – we had it several times, such as care of animals, care of plants
- mathematical games
- etc.

For example, when we did the theme of **Drama**, we wanted to see what the teachers can best teach through drama. We found that children can learn basic concepts very well through drama especially in social sciences. From this yearly experiment the teachers now teach social science through drama.

About **Paying Attention** for example we learned that it is important to define the needs of each teaching session. Some sessions require total attention with nothing in one's hands, and one's eyes and hands quiet. Some sessions require people to participate, call out, and not take turns. And some sessions require independent focus. We have found that it is important to tell the children that for the following time period we will do this type of lesson which requires this type of attention from them. They have learned for example that to meditate that requires a certain type of attention, where one is actually shutting out attention to all types of external things. It requires one's focus. And that does not work in a lesson. Some children sit in a group lesson and meditate. They do not respond and when it comes to meditate they want to be talking. We help them to see that they have

all the abilities but they are putting them at the wrong time. We tell them, you are using meditation time when it is group activity and that they are using group activity attention when it is meditation time. We have to define different types of attentions and when we apply them appropriately we will be successful.

## CHILDREN DON'T FORGET WHAT THEY LEARN BY DOING

This has been the main point I talk about to parents when they enroll their children. I say they are going to find lots of things that are different about our school from any other schools they have been to. And if they remember just one thing they'll understand it. And that is: **Think long term – stop thinking short term.**

What will the child remember years from now? What will they keep with them forever? That's what we are aiming for. So everything we do, the way we teach lessons, homework they'll understand this. The child's being is at the core and the subjects on the periphery. The things that they learn that are related to them, they remember. And the trick is to pull the subjects into the centre core or make connections. If the subjects are standing by themselves, and the children are memorizing facts for a test; that knowledge tends to go out of the mind, it will not remain with the child. But if what they learn is connected to the child's inner life it tends to be remembered. I have been seeing this for twenty years. Kids learn when it is connected – everything is brought into that centre piece.

*What is the connecting link?*

## SERVICE AND HANDS ON PROJECTS

The connecting link is doing service and hands on projects. Anytime the child is "doing" - as with drama, stories and games – the activity is connecting with their inner life, with their personality, with their personal development. When you read from a textbook and answer

questions an intelligent child who has a good cognitive ability can connect that through their brain but if you tell them act this out, their personality comes out, and then it becomes important to them because they think 'I want to do well,' 'I want the best part in it' or 'I don't want a part at all'. It becomes a part of their development. In the forefront of their mind is 'I remembered my lines' or, 'they gave me the best lines,' or 'everybody liked how I interpreted that character' – that's in the forefront of their minds but connected to that is for example, 'I learned the story of slavery written by Harriet Beecher Stowe.

I am slowly learning to understand why those ties work. One of the things I do to act out slavery, I let my class act out Uncle Tom's Cabin. I divide the class into 4 groups and let each group dramatize an act. And when they do that it's worth so much study about slavery, because they understand it, they understand how cruel it is, they understand why this play affected people and why they wanted to end slavery, why Americans wanted to end slavery after seeing this play on stage. How a book can change the world. This woman's book changed the course of America. And was probably the most powerful force behind the civil war and the change in America in the civil war. It became a sensation. This book of a woman changed the course of America.

In the same way in the American Revolution - there was a book 'Common Sense' that ignited the revolution. That's microvita; an idea can do that. They don't learn that from reading, they learn it from acting it out.

Another example is a hands-on project. We did one on an endangered species on Long Island called the Piping Plover. You have to do research on the bird, find out what organizations are active for and against it. And then do a project which could be either political like letter writing or it could be scientific such as building nesting areas. That's a tremendous learning opportunity. We did that and our students built a nesting area which stands on a pole in the water. They had to get permission from the government. We also put up some fencing to protect the area and signs at the

beach. **Anything that the children learn when they do something, they don't forget.**

## IDEAL OUTCOMES OF A NEOHUMANIST EDUCATION AT PSOLI

At our school we have a simple focus for the outcome of Neohumanist Education and that is for the child to realize that: "I have a gift, the world needs my gift and I am not afraid to offer it."

**I have a gift** - Now what this does is that you keep this in mind as a goal. You will try to see that God has given them a certain gift. So there is that connection to God. And there is the self-esteem. **The world needs my gifts** - this means the gifts are there for you to help others not for you to study for yourself, so this is your mission in a nutshell.

**I am not afraid to offer my gifts** - I have all the skills and I have been given them in a proper psychology and proper academics so that I can do it.

When I do individualized teaching I try to meet these goals. I do not try to get Danny to get in mathematics three years ahead. I'm trying to get Danny who is very poor in self control to go through his childhood feeling 'I have gifts; I have something of value to offer to society.' For him it may be math, for another child reading, for another art or for another child the ability to be a mediator. Every child has something that they can contribute. This is probably the most essential key to the success of PSOLI.

I can tell it in one story where you can see it all:

I had a little girl. She had all kinds of academic problems. She was diagnosed as having severe memory loss, language processing difficulty, inattentive and so she wasn't good in anything from her point of view. What a burden for a child to go through childhood being evaluated for all the right brain activities that she can't do, she can't remember, she can't process, she can't copy; she has physical problems. So if she would be in a

traditional school she would go through feeling 'I'm a failure.' She would not understand until she is an adult that you can succeed without being good at school things, school tasks. But by that time the damage is already been done to her psychology. By the time she reaches 21 or maybe even 40 or 50 she would think, I could have been a councilor, you don't have to have a good handwriting, you don't have good memory, you don't have to be good at math, you have to care about people and you have to have a good insight, but that was never taught at school, that was never part of my report card.

What happens to this child at PSOLI is that the whole child counts, and so when we look at the whole child we see weakness, weakness, weakness but we also see strength, strength, strength. What are the strengths? Artistic strength? interpersonal strength? And so we think how can we use the individualized learning time for that. Well, we made suggestions to her. And because she could remember everyone's names, everyone's birthdays, everyone's face and she cares about every new person – even though she can't remember anything else she seems to be able to remember that. She does it better than I do. I once heard myself saying, 'you know, I'll just ask J. what's the names of the new kids from B. and she'll know.' I don't know how she'll know but she'll know. So why can't we put that to use and maybe some of her artistic ability.

So we came up with some suggestion over a period of time. One of the suggestions that took root was to beautify the school bus. This combined her artistic and social ability. And the bus driver could not believe it, that a child in the school is actually trying to beautify her bus. She actually came up with an organizational plan to keep trash off the bus and making sure nobody lost anything. Now the buses are not even ours, they belong to other companies. So they were very thankful. Out of this the idea came that she could conference with children who were not happy on the bus and find out why. And out of that came a bus-conflict resolution committee where she would be the student chair person. She brought in a psychologist, a teacher representative. Every time she had her free work period she would go around

the school to the different bus groups of children and find out who was not happy and what their problems was. So as a result over time all the little children started to look up to her. They said if you have problem, go to J. and she will help you to solve your problem and you'll be happy. They went to her, the parents started to call and thank her and send her little gifts because the children were happy now on the bus instead of crying. And as a result of that J. started to stay 'I have a gift and the world needs my gift.' And what happened? As a result of that natural reward from her little society J. started to think, she started to accept instead of tears and frustration and 'I hate math' she started to say, 'you know Mr. Principal, I am not so good at math.'

And I said, 'you know, I am not so good at spelling and I can't remember people's names the way you can.'

She said, 'that's easy,'

'Well math is easy for me.' I said.

She said, 'so why don't you help me?'

'Well, you help me!'

So I started to tutor her and she was willing to work harder than all the other children, hours and hours and hours. It took her only two years and she could remember her time table, being age 9 and 10. But at the end of the two years, we have a child who was, let's say on an A-B-C-D-E-scale, a D student going to B+ and some As. She was getting an A - a 95 on social studies exam, getting 85 on math exam, being happy at school, caring about doing her homework. As a result I got parents who would say, 'you have saved my child's life. Anything you want I'll do for you. Anything, I don't care what you believe, I will just help you. Her father was a doctor. He would do anything for me. He'll come in during office hours and do blood tests or come after work hours because he feels I have saved his daughter's life. And that has a domino affect on other people.

So this story in a nutshell I think says what our school is best at. It is not about learning more than other children in other schools, it is not about learning as fast as you can. All the things, the individualized learning, the electives are so designed to get to the center of the person, to give them a sense of mission, a sense of purpose and

sense of self-esteem. If the child does not have self esteem they will not – they will be afraid to offer their gifts. They will not offer. The ultimate self-esteem is, 'I am God' but in the meantime if they don't feel that, they should at least feel, 'I am here for a reason, God put me here and gave me something, it's not an accident, I have to do something. I have to find out what it is.'

Children should not wait until they are 50, they should find out when they are young that they are valuable. Then they will do good things. When a child is happy, doing good things and feeling purposeful there is no limit to what the academics can become. And that's why you see these newspaper articles all the time. All these kids were average kids, why are they on top of their class? Because they went through their childhood feeling a sense of mission, feeling a sense of purpose, dedicating themselves and remembering everything they learned. It blossoms - it takes a long time for the academics to blossom. You cannot expect a five year old to learn to read, not everyone will do it, some will, and some won't. But the long time effects come from the core of the child being healthy. I always tell parents if you are looking for a school that has academic excellence you found it, but if you are looking for us to get there by testing and pressuring and homework and drilling your child, you did not find it. All the academic achievements that you hear about in our school are all side effects of the whole child being addressed. These are just the side benefits of the core being done well.

## WHAT ARE SOME OF THE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS OF PSOLI

We had entered the New York State's Stock Market Game thrice and won twice. That's a state wide competition in mathematics. We have had students accepted at Harvard, Yale, Princeton, we have had 9 school valedictorians in the last 6 years, 6 children on Broadway starring in Broadway shows (Lion King, Fiddler on the Roof, one playing Nelson Mandela etc.), we had the number one scrabble team in the entire State of New York

last year. We had the number one and two math students of Nassau County and we only had 12 children in the class! Our state test scores have been first or second for 5 years in a row in math and reading. This is for the whole state of New York compared against private and parochial schools. They don't compare us to the public schools but they used to rank us and we used to be always one or two in the whole state. That attracted a lot of people but we had to make them clear that they were coming to an alternative school because they thought they are coming to a rigorous academic school. But that's the unusual thing.

## INDIVIDUALIZED WORK

The practice of individualized work takes the teachers two years to learn. It's hard, but there are certain clear steps: you have to evaluate their math, their reading and their writing. And then you have to form groups of similar ability, and then you have to assign teachers to teach those groups, and then you have to provide a lot of independent work time, so the individuals can bring up their work one by one to the teacher and the teacher can see that their work is challenging in an appropriate fashion – not too easy and not too difficult. And then the teacher has to make adjustments according to the speed the children are learning at. So let's say Tess comes to my classroom to 4<sup>th</sup> grade and after I evaluate her I see that Tess is an average 4<sup>th</sup> grade math student with a weakness in multiplication facts, so I will group her with 5 other average math students and I will teach them math together every time I do math. But when we do individual work I give Tess some extra task of multiplication. When she brings me her work I find that Tess is progressing fast with her multiplication tasks and I find that she is the fastest learner of her group. And I begin to suspect that if I would give her a little bit more homework she could move up to the next level of math group, so I ask her parents would you be willing to work with your daughter on some topics she hasn't learned yet. And after a few months she would be sent to a higher math group which is at the level of 5<sup>th</sup> grade math. That's adjusting to her speed, that's an example of individualized learning.

Another example: I listen to Tess read and I find she is an expert fluent reader, she reads a lot of books, more than most children her age. So when it's time to do required novels instead of having her sit in and read with the class, I give her another book, tell her you have 7 days to read this book and then we'll have a study circle to talk about what this book means to you. The class may take 20 days to read the book. So when she is done with reading the book, the next 14 days I am going to give her another book that she is going to read independently and make it into a project. So while the class is studying one novel, Tess is studying two – that's individualized reading; it takes a lot of practice. You need a flexible schedule, with periods of individualized work time, need general independent work time. And you need an extra teacher; one teacher can't do it. Teachers in public schools aim at the middle because they can't take care of either the slow learners or the gifted because they have the whole class. They have no extra energy attention to give those below and above, it's the machine gun approach, it benefits the average. In our way we see that the children are unique, they can be good in one area and not in another; the real goal is not the academic but the personal.

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## YES – STUVOL – ELF - SPROUT

In coordination with the work to begin on the NHE Diploma Programme for Elementary grades, AMGK is beginning a project to produce books and encourage programs and activities related to the specialties of NHE in the areas of:

YES – Yoga Education in Schools or Astanga Yoga

STUVOL – Student Volunteers or Service and Dynamic Leadership

ELF – Earth Lover's Family or Sustainable Ecology

SPROUT – School PROUT (Progressive Utilization Theory) or Sustainable Socio-economics

Work on each area has already begun. The books will be by age group – Kindergarten, Elementary, Junior High, etc. Many of you have a wealth of material in these areas that you have created, assembled and successfully applied over the years, and we are asking you to share this material either by contributing to these AMGK publications, by creating publications from your own school and submitting them to AMGK for endorsement and distribution or by sending articles to Gurukula Network.

## SPROUT – School PROUT

PROUT studies are closely related to Social Studies in the NHE school curriculum. Below are some of the goals of the Social Studies Program at the elementary level NHE School, Progressive School of Long Island.

- Overcome narrow-mindedness
- Learn to evaluate sources of information
- Become a global citizen with knowledge of religions, cultures, geography
- Recognize strategies and patterns of exploitation
- Make judgements based on Principle of Social Equality
- Live one's judgements

### SPROUT NEWS

PROUTists of New York Sector will be assisting in the development of SPROUT curriculum for NHE schools. Others are invited as well

## Update on the YES Programme in Italy

This year YES (Yoga Education in Schools) was invited to Salerno for a convention about youth and their difficult relationships with public institutions and associations. With some impressive slides, more than 100 people, most of them educators and school directors, were informed about the potentialities of Yoga in the field of education and interpersonal relationships. Christian Franceschini gave the lecture and was afterwards invited to attend more specific meetings with public schools directors.



In Bolzano city, Franceschini is giving an introductory course on Astanga Yoga to more than 120 teachers of Kindergarten aged children. They are all teachers of the public kindergarten schools of South Tirol. 40 of them are getting personal training in starting a small yoga “education laboratory” in more than 11 kindergartens. The concepts of Gurukula and YES have been introduced to them and to the local government education authorities. The program is so successful that Franceschini has had to start 2 courses because so many teachers have enrolled.



In Trento City Franceschini taught a professional development course for Primary and Secondary public school teachers on Yoga and Self-control in the Classroom. More than 30 teachers attended and told him afterwards that it was the most interesting professional development course they had attended in the past 10 years. Teachers and their adolescent daughters and sons are going to get further private training in Tantra and Yoga from the middle of October until December.



A total number of 50 copies of the book *Tantric Biopsychology*, written by Franceschini in Italian, were sold just in one week. Also many kiirtan CDs have been purchased by the teachers for use during certain moments of class lessons (like painting, arts etc.)

For more information, you may contact Christian Franceschini at <viplava@tin.it>

### YES NEWS

The YES manual for Early Childhood is in the final stages of preparation and will be available on CD soon. To purchase a copy, please write to [amgk.glo@gurukul.edu](mailto:amgk.glo@gurukul.edu). Work on the manual for elementary level is beginning with Didi Anandarama and Christian Franceschini and we invite input from all our schools.

# YES in Portugal

By Rui Guimaraes and the Yoga Activities for Children team

In September 2004 we formed a team of those interested to participate in a concrete program of Yoga for Children. As a result we developed yoga activities in four schools (three public and one private), once a week, during the entire last school year. We planned the activities according to Neohumanist Education principles and before initiating the program, we presented the general guidelines of Neohumanist philosophy to the headmasters in these schools. The program was very successful and the children loved the experience so we are continuing the program for this school year and are working to expand to include four more schools, for a total of eight. In the beginning it was a hard task, because generally children are used to very competitive activities. We learned a lot from our first year and are now finalizing a file of activities to use this year, using and reinforcing good experiences and changing what did not work as well.



Another activity that we developed in the yoga centre, was the "Chapeu de Alquimia" (The Alchemy Hat), a workshop of Yoga and Arts. There were five sessions of 3 hours each session. In each of them there was a theme related with one nature element, yoga asanas and a different art expression. Each session started with a story with yoga asanas followed by exercises of the art of the day- painting, sculpture, theatre, etc. In the last session the parents were invited to take an active participation and they just loved the experience. An outline of the program is included on the next page. We have decided to repeat this project from November on this year.

In June 2005 we participated in a big education event, promoted by the municipality -

SintrAnima/ Anual - Educative Projects Forum where we shared yoga activities for children. These activities were prepared in such a way that the teachers, kindergarten educators and parents could participate. It was a very fruitful experience. This event had about 20,000 visitors in 8 days.



More recently, from 7 to 11 September we participated in the Vegetariana 2005 (vegetarian fair), selling vegetarian food, doing Tantra Yoga demonstrations, offering Yoga activities for children and sharing about Neohumanist Education. We got many students for the yoga courses starting now.

In a short period of time we will be able to exchange some didactic material, some examples of good educative practices, etc.

We wish great success to all involved in the education projects (and others of course) going on around the world, and for those who are thinking about start something: do it now!



YES

## YOGA AND ARTS FOR CHILDREN "Chapeu de Alquimia" (The Alchemy Hat)

This year we had an activity for children called "The Alchemy Hat" - a workshop of Yoga and Arts. There were five sessions (3 hours each session). In each of them there was a theme related with one nature element, asanas and a different art. Each session started with a story with asanas followed by exercises of the art of the day- painting, sculpture, theatre, etc.

1st. session- "CELEBRATION OF THE MOTHER EARTH"

Element: earth

Art: dance

Asanas related with the earth: mountain, snake, tree

-Dance of the earth (song with simple movements): "The earth is our mother/we should take care of her /united my people we are one"



2nd. session- "THE OCEAN OF FEELINGS"

Element: water

Art: painting

Asanas related with water: fish, crocodile, boat, snake, wale

-Exercise with water watercolours- paint the sea and the sun



3rd. session- "THE BIRD THAT WAS REBORN FROM THE ASHES"

Element: fire

Art: theatre

Asanas to call the fire of our body: boat, bridge; kaoshikii

Story of the phoenix

-Concentration exercise- observing the flame of a candle

Theater exercises; the game of the statues (statues related with fire)

4rd. session- "THE TRIP OF THE BIRDS"

Element: air

Art: sculpture

Asanas: tree, monkey, lion, turtle; dead posture- visualise the clouds

- Exercises: creating mobiles with suspended figures (birds, butterflies); building nests (with clay) to offer to the birds

5th. session- "THE FANTASTIC TREASURE HUNT"

Celebration of all the elements

-We prepared, with the children, a treasure hunt and we invited the parents to participate

-Together with the parents we danced (Dance of Earth), then the children have made a choreographic demonstration of some asanas and in the end we made a concentration exercise with candles. In the end the parents shared some sentences they wrote during the session. Everyone was very inspired!



## STUVOL – Student Volunteers

*STUVOL, a programme of NHE, was outlined in the May 2005 issue of this newsletter. Among other things, STUVOL offers students activities through which they can develop their service spirit and grow into caring and benevolent people.*

### Service-Learning for Grades K – College

#### What is Service-Learning?

Service-learning is a method of teaching, learning and reflecting that combines academic classroom curriculum with meaningful community service. It is coordinated between a school and a community service organization whether non-profit, charitable or governmental. Engaging students in service activities, service-learning offers an opportunity for young people, from kindergarten to university level, to get involved with their communities in a tangible way while using what they learn in the classroom to solve real-life problems. Service-learning can be applied across all subjects and grade levels; it can involve a single student or group of students, a classroom or an entire school. Students build character, become active participants in their community and strengthen their thinking, discussion and writing skills as they plan, reflect on and document their activities. Service-learning curriculum units are part of a STUVOL program in NHE schools.

#### A Service Learning Example

Matt Oppenheim has put together a service learning curriculum unit for middle and high schools in response to the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in the USA. The students investigate the racial, ecological and political issues that contributed to the tragedy and are given the opportunity to fundraise for AMURT as a response to the situation. The curriculum includes a power point presentation and a teacher's manual to accompany it. An outline of the program follows.

#### Goals

- Investigate the ecological, social, economic, and political issues impacting victims of Hurricane Katrina
- Dialogue with a disaster relief team director from AMURT: The Ananda Marga Universal Relief Team
- Organize a project that has the greatest value
- Evaluate the experience - What have you learned?

#### Questions for the Students to Explore

1. What do we already know about Katrina and how it has affected the lives of people and the environment of the Gulf Coast states? Describe a day in the life of a poor family in the disaster areas.
2. How has Katrina affected you? Do you have friends or relatives that live in the disaster area? What have they told you about their experience?
3. What is being done now to help victims? How effective are current services at meeting the survival needs of victims?

## STUVOL

4. How are (a) environmental issues, (b) political & economic issues,(c) disaster management and (d) ethnicity and income issues impacting the victims
5. How does history help us understand what will happen from the impacts of Katrina in the coming years.
6. How can we support the most effective service? What are the best short-term and long term solutions?

## Action Plan

7. Have the students contact an AMURT Disaster Relief Director. Ask questions to find out more about the situation and how to take the most effective action
8. Decide on a project in consultation with the AMURT relief organization. Make a plan, form teams and take action. Define immediate needs and effective action. How will victims build a secure life? What are long-term solutions that build sustainable futures?
9. Implement a project with your classroom to raise funds or take other means of action to educate people, offer your services, and continue to communicate and work with relief and community development projects

## Reflection

10. Think about what you have learned. Have you been effective at investigating the disaster? Was your service project effective? What did you learn about working together? What skills did you use in this project? What did you learn about yourself? What do you believe will happen after the disaster? Why? Think about government impacts, economic impacts, cultural and ethnic impacts, educational impacts, ecological impacts, and social impacts. What is the best scenario, the worst scenario, and the most realistic scenario? Build a case for your perspective

For more information or for a copy of this curriculum unit, please contact Matt Oppenheim at:  
<oppenm@earthlink.net>

## STUVOL NEWS

The Progressive School of Long Island (PSOLI) has instituted STUVOL this year as a required element of their new middle school. The children have 1-2 periods a week of STUVOL. They meet in groups of about 8 students (ages 11-13) with a staff representative. So far each group has taken on both a collective service project and an individual service project. Naturally the Hurricane has attracted a lot of sympathy, so personalized care packages are being made by all students in the school under the direction of STUVOL. They have also raised \$400 for AMURT so far through bake sales.

AMGK is preparing STUOVOL Guidelines for Grade K – 12. If you would like a copy of the current outline, or if you have input you would like to contribute, please write to <amgk.glo@gurukul.edu>

New STUVOL booklets for KG 1 and KG 2 have been prepared for Delhi sector with material mostly taken from Circle of Love. Work on elementary level will be next.

## ELF - Earth Lovers Family

Neohumanism is closely linked to the care of the environment and all its inhabitants, and our schools and educational programmes prominently reflect this in their activities. The first Environmental Education manual called 'ELF – Earth Lovers Family' was prepared by Didi Anandamitra in the early 1980s. From this early initiative AMGK decided to carry on the further development of Environmental Education in our schools and call it ELF.

ELF activities are included in the school curriculum. The main objective of ELF is that our schools are truly a family that loves the immediate environment and all its inhabitants. Each school needs to research their local environment and have clear knowledge of the environmental problems. This research can include contacting all the local organisations working for the environment. The school can have regular activities to help alleviate the environmental problems starting from the immediate school surrounding and extending to an increasing wider radius from the school.

### Some Activity Ideas

- Make a nursery - collect seeds, learn grafting – this could generate income and serve the community by distributing for free. Experiment with rare varieties.
- Organise exhibitions, seminars, concerts, debates, invite speakers regarding conservation in the community.
- Separate garbage – compost, paper, recycle things if possible. Use basket or bag when shopping.
- Collect garbage wherever you see it. Organise garbage cleanups at the beach, parks, sale areas, school, street sides, forests, etc.

A class ages 10-12 cleaned up the beach and informed people how plastic harms marine life. This class learned that plastic garbage can kill marine animals like turtles, fish and seagulls if they swallow it or get tangled in it. They decided to pick up plastic and collected 100 sacks full. They also made leaflets with statistics and information about dangers of garbage for marine life and handed them to tourists, local people and students. On the day of clean-up even their parents joined them.

*From a booklet prepared for Environmental Education camp at Ananda Shyama MU  
Did you know?*

- The insect eating falcon can see a dragon fly from 1km distance?
- That the blue whale needs to eat 3 tons of food a day and its tongue can weigh 4 tons?
- That to make 1kg honey bees must collect nectar from 4 million flowers?
- That tarantulas can live for 2 ½ years without food?
- That on 1 acre of land there are 1 million spiders?
- That there are 10,000 varieties of the rose?
- That 1 kg raw cotton makes 60,000 km of thread?
- That sea cows live on seaweed and sea grass
- That every person in the world must plant 4 trees a year from now onward to counteract the greenhouse effects?

### ELF Related Resources for Teachers and Students

#### **Share the World - <http://www.sharetheworld.com>**

“For today’s young people, developing empathy towards animals can be a key step towards developing empathy for, and rejecting violence against, all beings, including human beings. Share the World is a free educational programme designed to help your students better understand and appreciate the animal kingdom. Your pupils will use their thinking, reading and writing skills to work through the reproducible activities that form the heart of this programme.”

#### **OnEarth - <http://www.nrdc.org/onearth/05fal/default.asp>**

“The award-winning environmental magazine, explores politics, nature, wildlife, culture, science, health, the challenges that confront our planet, and the solutions that promise to heal and protect it.”

#### **Oxfam Cool Planet for Teachers and Children**

<http://www.oxfam.org.uk/coolplanet/>

<http://www.oxfam.org.uk/coolplanet/kidsweb/index.htm>

In Other

# Global NHE News



## Georgetown Sector

### Paraguay

#### By Dada Paradevananda

I have been working in Paraguay since 2000. Here we have three schools in total. Paraguay is a very poor country and needs help in every aspect. ERAWS runs one school in Sajonia, a very slum area of Asuncion City. We started this service project about 12 years back to give free education to the poor children of this area. The elderly mother of a member of Ananda Marga had sold this land for a very low price. There we began our first school in 1992 in a small constructed house.

But now by Grace, we have constructed a building for the school. We have two big rooms and two toilets separated for boys and girls. In 2000 with the help of a social organisation we did the construction spending \$4000 for this project. We are offering daily food to the children. In our school we have 20 children. We have Jardin and Pre Jardin (children between 2 to 4). Our school teacher is giving education using the play way methods of NHE.

Didi Ananda Sushila is running two WWD schools in Paraguay; One in Capiata where we have a primary school with more than 300 children and another one in Mercado de Abasto with 40 poor children.

We have 2 Master units in Paraguay. The one in Sapucaí is run by WWD and the other in Itamoroti is run by ERAWS. In May we distributed 500 pairs of shoes to the poor families nearby. Dada Divyashvarupananda is rector in Itamoroti there and is doing good work in the MU. We have 7 cows; 3 gives milk. We produce cheese and sell to the public. Also Dada planted 1000 marguja fruits plants for commerce purposes.

## Manila Sector

### Mynamar

A new school has been started in Mynamar. The land and building are purchased and already they had 25 children on the first day. More are expected. Another school will be started in the near future also.

## Berlin Sector

### Stockholm, Sweden

As Director of CNS, Dada Shambhushivananda is collaborating with an ecological research group in Stockholm. Study of Sustainable patterns is the focus of this research group.



## Hong Kong Sector

### Sarkar School, Taiwan



The Sarkar School has grown to 21 students. Kulapati, Dada Shambhushivananda inspected the school in October, 2005. Their new web site is:

<http://myweb.hinet.net/home8/sarkar-school/index.html>



## Delhi Sector

### Pakistan

In May a preschool was opened in Pakistan unit with 25 students and two teachers.

## New York Sector

### News from Haiti

#### By Demeter Russafov

CENEOH Haiti (Centre for Neohumanist Education) has launched several new programs targeting both students and surrounding community in Port-au-Prince. USAID has funded the completion of a computer hall with 12 new computers, a fast speed Internet connection, and printing and Xerox services, offering computer certification classes and Internet access. The demand has been great, and all classes have already filled up. Especially excited are the students and teachers, who are now able to access the virtual library for class assignments and information.

The Haitian Karate Association has chosen the CENEOH campus as its national training and demonstration site. An amphitheatre stage has been built to accommodate planned performances. Karate, yoga, and dance continue to take a significant part of the school curriculum. A well-known local artist has also joined the teaching staff, offering classes in drawing, sculpture, painting, calligraphy, and traditional crafts. Several studios have been added for the new school year, and a beautiful new meditation and yoga studio provides a space for classes and meditation sessions.

Thanks to a \$300,000 grant by USAID AMURT-Haiti has continued to expand the educational focus of its development activities. It renovated a community school in the Northwest of Haiti, paying for salaries, uniforms, and other expenses. The opening of the school was celebrated with a grand cultural event by the village. AMURT has started a system of Environmental Education Seminars for teachers, and has expanded its canteen and nutrition program to include the training of community school health and nutrition agents. AMURT's Northwest staff has grown to include 6 agronomists, 3 engineers, and 8 teachers. A solar ovens assembly and demonstration plant, and a factory/demonstration site for bio-sand water filtration systems give full-time employment to 21 local people, and offer classes and training to schools and community members. The first environmental demonstration site has been established in the village of Tite Place, with a fruit tree nursery and sustainable bio-intensive agriculture complex. By December local schools' pupils will begin planting the first of 50,000 mango and avocado trees along mountain slopes and ravines to help stabilize the soil and raise the water table. The objective is to define community managed fruit forests and green belts. The initiative has received a wide praise by USAID, which has become interested in AMURT's blending of environmental education and community



*Installing solar panels and Internet connection for a village school, Anse Rouge, NW Haiti*

development. The agency has committed to supporting an expansion of the activities for the next calendar year.

### Guatemala

#### By Didi Anumaya

The Ananda Marga Preschool Bello Despertar (Beautiful Awakening) in Guatemala was started by ERAWS in 1989 in Limonada, one of the poorest areas in the capital. This year 100 children ranging from 3-7 years old started in January in the two classrooms. Now in October, 76 of them are completing the school year. Since preschools are not obligatory they are highly undervalued and few in Guatemala. The result is that many children in start first grade at the age of seven without any preparation. The difficulty in adjusting to the environment has led to many children leaving their education without even completing first grade. That is also why we have kept the emphasis on the importance of the preschool.

We ask for a contribution of 15 Quetzales (US\$2), although everybody doesn't pay. Since it's not enough to cover the costs the local members of Ananda Marga contribute towards the salaries of the teachers and the materials.

This year for the first time electricity was installed in the building. Often the toilet is broken, the roof leaking, and the windows smashed. But the Ananda Marga Preschool continues to be popular among the community, because children having gone here are the best in their class when they get to primary school.

### Santa Rosa, California

The Progressive Kindergarten and Preschool had its first day this September. Jyotsna Henry has started this new school initiative with 2 students, but hopes to expand to 7 as soon as she receives the daycare license she has applied for. Jyotsna is also a NHE Diploma Program student and hopes to grow this small school to a full NHE elementary school.

# Neohumanist Education for All

Notes from a presentation given by Didi Anandarama at the Berlin Sector ETC  
July 2005

Neohumanist Education is firmly rooted in the philosophy and principles of Neohumanism which is defined as the practice of love for all creation including plants, animals and the inanimate world. Neohumanism stands for the liberation of intellect from dogmas and limiting sentiments and extending one's loving heart to all and everything in this universe. It is a harmonious blending of oriental introversial philosophy and occidental extroversial science.

## **NHE has four pillars**

**Philosophy – Principles – Methods- Teacher**

**I. Philosophical Foundations** of NHE are based on the definitions of philosophy as given by Shrii P. R. Sarkar which comprise the following:

**Ontology** – Oneness of existence

**Epistemology** – Absolute and relative knowledge

**Axiology** – Cardinal human values

**Psychology** – Expanded view of the mind

**Metaphysics** – Cycle of creation

**Spiritual Practise** – Yoga practices

## **II. NHE Principles**

From the above philosophical components we derive practical guiding principles for NHE, which are:

**Universal Love** (Ontology)

**Knowledge of Self and World Applied**

for universal welfare, ecological and social consciousness, academic, practical and personal skills (Epistemology)

**Cardinal Human Values and**

**Universalism** (Axiology)

**Holistic Development of the Child**

(Psychology)

**Unique unfolding of the Individual**

(Metaphysics)

**Astaunga Yoga** (Spiritual Practice)

NHE is empowering children in two ways: internally through personal development with the goal to realize oneself; and externally through acquisition of worldly knowledge with the goal to serve the world in a better way. NHE strives for a harmonious balance between subjective inner development and objective adjustment in the world. Personal development is the backbone of the curriculum and therefore the NHE curriculum places subjects of self-development at the core, such as Supra Aesthetics, Music and Arts, Language Arts, YES-Astaunga Yoga, Philosophy, Biopsychology,

Physical Education, Communication and STUVOL. Other subjects come at the periphery such as earth sciences, maths, history etc. The core subjects ensure the desired outcome as envisioned by Shrii P. R. Sarkar in the Education anagram:

**E**nlargement of mind

**D**iscipline

**U**niversal outlook

**C**haracter

**A**ctive habits

**T**rustworthiness

**I**deation of the Great

**O**mniscient grace

**N**ice temperament

## **III. NHE Methods**

While the philosophy and principles of NHE are fixed, its methodology is flexible, creative and culturally sensitive. NHE curriculum specifics are emergent and integrated, tapping into the interests of the student and meeting the needs of real life in the locality. A few significant highlights of NHE methods given by Shrii P.R. Sarkar are what he calls the 'Fundamentals of Learning' which are:

1. *freedom from dogma*
2. *awaken thirst for knowledge*
3. *freedom from distractions (internal, external, societal, emotional, etc)*

Students are best taught through:

1. *the exemplary role of the teacher*
2. *The current of joy – stories, play, games, rhythm, movement, repetition, project work.*
3. *Inquiry by students*
4. *Idealism and realism*

## **IV. Teachers are Social Leaders**

They embody the noblest qualities of humanity: personal integrity, strength of character, righteousness, a feeling for social service, unselfishness, inspiring personality, leadership ability, high professional standard

# NHE Materials For Sale from AMGK and Other Sources

## Joyful Things by Kamala

CD of songs includes the voices of 70 children from the Ananda Marga River School in Australia along with top musicians  
<[inrsong@ozemail.com.au](mailto:inrsong@ozemail.com.au)>.



## Circle of Love Early Childhood Education Manual and MP3 Songs on Computer CD

Thanks to Mahajyoti and Arun this CD version of the manual is now available. The original songs have been retrieved and converted to MP3 format thanks to Giridhara. On this computer CD, the manual is available as six PDF files which can be read directly from your computer or printed. The Circle of Love Songs are available as 307 MP3 music files. Cost \$10 US plus shipping. To obtain a copy, please write to:  
<[amgk.glo@gurukul.edu](mailto:amgk.glo@gurukul.edu)>



## Children By Didi Ananda Ragamaya

A song about honouring the rights of our children, loving them and encouraging them to reach their full potential.

<http://www.griotmusic.com>

## Kid's Yoga Poster

This brightly coloured poster, made in Taiwan, is available for sale from Gurukula Academy of Taiwan. Measures approximately 20 x 30 inches.

<[ihvad@ms48.hinet.net](mailto:ihvad@ms48.hinet.net)>

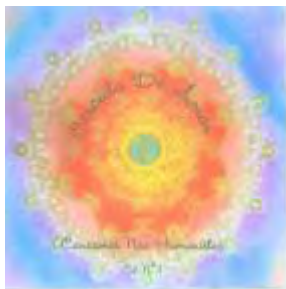


## Circle of Love Songs on Music CDs

The Circle of Love manual includes over 300 songs for children. Through the efforts of Giridhara, the original tapes have now been transferred to a set of four music CDs. This set of four CDs is available for \$20 plus shipping. To obtain copies, please write to:  
<[amgk.glo@gurukul.edu](mailto:amgk.glo@gurukul.edu)>.

## New CDs from AMGK PowerPoint Resource n. 1

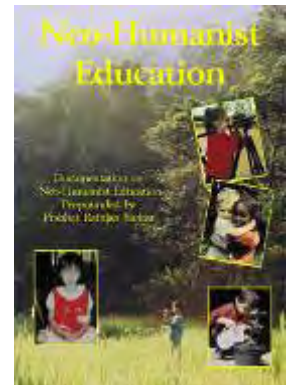
a CD collection of PowerPoint presentations useful for teacher training and introductory lectures on NHE. To obtain copies, please write to:  
<[amgk.glo@gurukul.edu](mailto:amgk.glo@gurukul.edu)>.



**Circulo De Amor**  
By Didi Prema  
Didi Prema sings 20 Neohumanist songs for children in Spanish.  
[amgk.glo@gurukul.edu](mailto:amgk.glo@gurukul.edu)

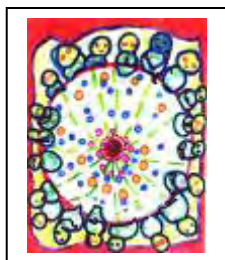
## Neo-Humanist Education A Documentation on NHE Schools Around the World Edited by Avtk Ananda Rama Ac

This full sized 100 page book provides a colorful picture of the Neohumanist Education system world wide, with over 40 articles and 260 pictures from NHE schools around the world. The articles are written by teachers working in the schools, giving a first hand look into the NHE classroom. Available through [amgk.glo@gurukul.edu](mailto:amgk.glo@gurukul.edu)



## Puppets and Dolls from Peru

You can order from [www.rurapuk.com](http://www.rurapuk.com) or contact Didi Ananda Muktiavrata ([didiamv@ec-red](mailto:didiamv@ec-red)).



### **Circle of Love STUVOL Guides for Kindergarten**

New STUVOL booklets for KG 1 and KG 2 have been prepared for Delhi Sector by AMGK mostly from material from the Circle of Love manual. Anyone interested to reproduce them in their own Sector

can contact [amgk.glo@gurukul.edu](mailto:amgk.glo@gurukul.edu)

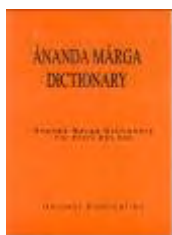
## **Other Publications from AMGK**



### **Yoga Warm-ups Prepare your body for subtle asanas – by Mita Chen and Kaomudi**

Yoga warm-ups is a compilation of poses that comes with complete instructions to guide you through your exercise routine. Suitable for all ages and levels of fitness and

strength. Mita Chen with her wealth of knowledge and experiences as a yoga teacher has carefully selected and demonstrated the poses which are helpful for yoga aspirants. Kaomudi is a registered physiotherapist with the New Zealand Board of Physiotherapists.



### **Ananda Marga Dictionary For Every Day Use Compiled by Ac Premayananda Avt**

An Ananda Marga dictionary compiled by Dada Premamayananda has been published under the guidance of AMGK Publications in Bangkok.

The book has 160 pages and contains more than 1500 entries. Order at: [amdictionary@eudoramail.com](mailto:amdictionary@eudoramail.com) The cost is \$6 wholesale, and \$12 resale.

## **Status of Books and CDs Published by AMGK**

### **Books Currently Available**

Discourses on Neohumanist Education - Shrii Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar

Documentation of NHE - Ed. Avtk Anandarama Ac  
Head in the Stars, Feet on the Ground - Avtk Ananda Nivedita Ac

Teach me to Fly - Avtk Ananda Nivedita Ac

Bio-Psychology - Dr. Jitendra Singh

Situating Sarkar - Sohail Inyatullah

Transcending Boundaries - Eds. Sohail Inyatullah and Jennifer Fitzgerald

Ananda Marga Dictionary - Ac Premamayananda Avt

Yoga Warm-ups - Mita Chen and Kaomudi

Wisdom and Mystical Verses of Sanor - Ac

Shambhushivananda Avt

Tantra-Conf. Proceedings -Ac Shambhushivananda Avt

### **Books Available in India Only**

Ananda Sutram Word Index - Ladli Prasad

Notes on Varna Vijanana - A. R. Sarangi

### **Books Out of Print**

Gurukula through the Ages - Ac Shambhushivananda Avt

In Search of Ideal Education - Ac Shambhushivananda Avt

Conference Proceedings on NHE - Ed. Ac Shambhushivananda Avt

Gurukul Education-Mumbai speech - Ac Shambhushivananda Avt

### **Teacher Resources Produced by AMGK**

**(see page 3 for details)**

NHE Resources

NHE Diploma Programme

NHE Introductory Certificate Programme

AMGK Standards for NHE Schools

### **CDs and Multi-media Productions by AMGK**

Circle of Love (Revised Edition) - manual and songs - Ed. Avtk Ananda Mitra Ac

Kids Yoga Poster - Arunima

NHE Power points and NHE video clips

# Neohumanist Education



*This drawing is from a new edition of Shrii PR Sarkar's children's book, "The Golden Lotus of the Blue Sea", which is being illustrated by Isidra Rojo and prepared by Didi Anandarama. The drawings will be made available with translations of the Golden Lotus story in other languages. Interested persons please contact Didi Anandarama.*

*Drawing copyrighted 2005 AM Publications*

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