



# Sri Sathya Sai Zone 6 Youth Newsletter

## November – December 2007

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Om Sri Sai Ram!

May this New Year bring us the yearning, the enthusiasm and the strength for all the divine activities of 2008.

As you will notice, the newsletter has an additional section called "agenda" with the aim to inform the youth of our zone and whoever is interested about the future events a/o activities.

Happy New Year and enjoy the reading!

### Love All Serve All Meeting 7<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> December 2007 Divignano - Italy

Around 50 youth from 6 countries of Zone 6 - Spain, Switzerland, Italy, Slovenia, Croatia and Greece - and 1 country of Zone 7 - Austria - participated in this weekend program in Mother Sai complex in Divignano, Italy.



The purpose of the meeting was to allow the musicians and singers to compile songs from these different countries and record them so they would be available to youth around Europe to use them for practice. The second purpose was to train the organizing and logistics team in the management and leadership skills in a spiritual organization.

The program started on Saturday morning with several bhajans and a plenary session for all participants. Ivan Bavcevic gave a welcome address and introduced all the people responsible for different topics of the meeting and the goals which needed to be achieved in 2 days.

The group split in 2 different teams (musical and organizing) where they proceeded with their agendas.

The musical team worked the whole Saturday on practicing the songs that each individual country brought with them and in the evening they started with recording. Recording was held after dinner and both teams participated in singing (musical and organizing teams).

The organizing team went through a series of workshops: Leadership, Communications and Problem solving. Workshops were held from the point of view of spiritual principles, but merged with the internationally accepted management skills and tools. The participants went deep into each topic and discussed different practical issues from every day life, especially related to Swami's teachings and management of Sai organization. It was more like a very constructive and introspective satsang than a management workshop, but it gave many concrete answers to daily situations that each coordinator of Love All Serve All project might face while doing their duty.

Sunday program continued in the same fashion as on Saturday with 2 groups doing their separate parts until 11AM.

The organizing team went through the Project Management workshop which consisted of planning, organizing, and control modules. This workshop was used to do real planning for LASA for the next 6 months on the European level and

to teach the participants how to plan activities locally.



The outcome of the planning was to:

1. Put all the recorded songs on-line to allow the youth to download the songs locally and learn them.
2. Organize a public performance of LASA in Pescara on Sunday February 17<sup>th</sup> 2008, during the national conference of Italian Sai organization. Youth of Zone 6 would be invited to participate.
3. Choreography would be video taped separately by January 15<sup>th</sup> and uploaded to the website.
4. Propose that Love All Serve All project, as a project dedicated to human values, be included and presented during the World EHV Conference in Prasanthi in July 2008.
5. Youth will propose logo and image for LASA to be accepted.

*Ivan Bavcevic  
Zone 6 Youth Coordinator*

After 11AM all the youth participated in final recording of the songs. The list of the recorded songs is the following: Who I Am, Love Divine, We Are One, Call from Love, Waterfall, Heart To Heart, I Will Create, I Praise, Serving & loving.

Between 11am and Noon, Suzanne Carenini, Saja Svilar and Ivan Bavcevic had a meeting to discuss Sathya Sai Leadership Training Program for Zone 6. Ivan presented the materials he used for different trainings in Sai organization so far and Suzanne did the same. It was decided that Saja will go over different materials from the UK and Zone 6.



This combined program would also be presented to ESSE Institute to receive their advice and suggestions before making it final.

The meeting ended with a group photo and conclusions and greeting by Ivan, Mladen and Angelo.

Sai Ram!

## Croatia

"Dear aspects of Sai,  
As you have been already informed in previous issue of newsletter, Youth of Croatia spent month of November in Prashanti Nilayam, participating along other countries from ex-Yugoslavia in project called Joy of Awakening. There are many reports, on how divine it was, from all members and some of them were included in our National Newsletter, which BTW has a new editor, Gordana Sarcevic from Rijeka.

Just to get the picture, let me share with you just one "short" overview:

"What has made us start the project so big, resulting in eruption of bliss and happiness in Prashanti Nilayam on that November of 2007? Our great longing for Divine, our surrender without hesitation, team work and élan that lead us in few past years, harmonized the stars of fate

and left the Divine Creator of whole drama choiceless.

Group of 407 people appeared so unreal, possibly the largest one "white man" created since the incarnation of the Lord in Puttaparthi. Not to be misunderstood, our brown-skin „good-boy“ Dhroeh Nankoe, as we used to call him Duje, joined our troops and with his selfless soul and musical rhythm refined our company.



Rehearsal after rehearsal, darshan after darshan, there was no time to loose, almost, at all. We were fed with vibrations that we were creating together amongst ourselves as well as we derived energy looking at the beautiful creature dressed in orange robe while being always aware of His omnipresence.



Since the late evening hours until the very early morning, shift after shift were interchanging in

*NYC Croatia,  
Antonio Bratos*

decoration of the abode of the Holiest Peace with most beautiful ornaments.

Like the bee that cannot leave the honeyed flower, we were buzzing around every corner of the Kulwant Hall, in silent enthusiasm.

After countless decorative butterflies and flowers as well as vivid, fragrant flower decorations, the day has come – a dream come true: opportunity to sing in front of and for Swami.

We started the Programme with Veda chanting (*Ganapati Prārthana, Sarvadevatāgayatri, Saha navavatu*), followed by the sounds and rhythm of "so-many-times-practiced" songs, experiencing at the very end, Grace of the descending of the Narayana Himself amongst His bhaktas yearning to be at His Lotus Feet. We believe that some of the moments filled with Grace we would be able to perceive in due time, but some of them even our soul cannot grasp but only guess what was happening there and what kind of processes Divine Mother and Father has started within us.



Immensely blessed, indeed, as we are we must be examples and acknowledge from day to day "brotherhood of men in fatherhood of God". May this 2008 find you all spreading Sai love to all those that you (will) meet and may you experience happiness and peace within you, so you could be called Messengers of Sai Love - without any doubt.

Sending you heaps of Sai Unconditional Love!  
Om Sri Sai Ram!

## Merging into the Divine: Fate or Divine Grace?

What was it that prompted us to launch such a huge project which resulted in burst of bliss and joy in Prashanti Nilayam, in November 2007?

Our strong yearning for the Divine, our devotion without hesitation, group working together and rapture that had been leading us in the last few years, aligned all the stars of destiny and left the Divine Creator of this drama "without" a choice.

This group of 407 people, perhaps the biggest one comprised of white people, since the Lord has incarnated in Puttaparthi, seemed somehow unreal in its numerousness and togetherness. So, as not to be misunderstood, our dark-skinned "good-boy" Dhroeh, who came to be known as Duje (a common Croatian name©) although he is from the Netherlands, supported our ranks and enriched our gathering with his selfless soul and musical rhythms.

Rehearsal after rehearsal, darshan after darshan followed, without almost no time for a break. We were feeding off vibrations which we'd been creating together as well as glances at the beautiful Being in orange robe, with our consciousness always focused at His omnipresence. From the evening hours till early morning hours we had been decorating in shifts the abode of Sacred Peace with the most splendid ornaments that ever adorned it. Just as a bee cannot detach itself from a honey-filled flower, likewise we had been humming in quiet ecstasy in every corner of the Mandir. Sometimes there were 50 of us present, we were making up chores just to be able to drink from that source a little while longer. Seva people in the Mandir and Baba's closest bodyguards seemed to understand that game or they just, acting as a vehicle of Divine Grace, allowed us everything; we used to decorate the same spot several times, they permitted us to take pictures, we walked the space above the Mandir where Baba used to start His darshan in earlier times, and a few were even allowed to make prostration at Baba's entering door. A small team of girls and women was continually present during all the decorating activities, they would go to their rooms just to refresh a bit, and then start a new day as if led by some fascinating energy; such is a vibration of this holy place.

After countless ornaments in form of butterflies and flowers being installed, and also fresh, fragrant flower arrangements, there came the day we waited so eagerly for – singing performance before Swami! A fixed and authorized program was supposed to start with Vedic chants. Out of the half an hour long Vedic program Baba has allowed us to sing to Him that which we, as a smaller group, have shared with others (*Gaiapati Prarthana*), together with a joint gift from the Slovenian and Croatian vedic group (*Sarvadevatāgayatri* – an invocation and prayer to various deities). Then followed *Sahnāvavatu*, an invocation concerning everlasting relationship between a master and a disciple, which ended the Vedic performance. And then we sank into ecstasy of much-rehearsed cultural and *bhajana* rhythms, while enjoying the Grace of Narayana Himself descending among His yearning devotees...

Innumerable are the blessings which we received during our stay. We all made a harmonious whole which the Lord could not resist. We believe that some of the blessings and some of the mercies we could well become aware of, but even our soul can merely sense what has been happening there and which processes the Divine Mother and Father has initiated in us. I also feel that none of those who were left in the mother country has been neglected or forgotten; every tear, cry, every smile, every selfless deed, every positive thought put into *The Joy of Awakening* project will leave an everlasting trace in the heart of our beloved Sadguru...

At the end I would like to share with you the most intimate moments spent alone with Baba in the interview room. They were so intimate that they surpassed the boundaries of intimacy and became a proof of His universal message.

At the interview, while I was awaiting Baba's return from the smaller room, in my thoughts resounded a prayer of the olden-time rishis with which I have merged many times: "Lokāh Samastāē Sukhino Bhavantu..." The strength and power of this prayer could almost be touched, experienced, my consciousness was so still, constant and all-pervading...in those moments I asked Swami to "install" me into Him, to pervade my soul with the all-encompassing greatness of

His spirit. In that instant the door of the small room opened and He gently approached to me and said, "Go"! I was wondering why was He throwing me out now, but then Adriano, a friend who was accompanying me, explained the matter – "He's inviting you into the small room."

Conversation between the two of us was just a mere formality, a superficial thing, but at the same time a part of the Divine *līla*. I myself was providing answers to most of my questions, while He kept repeating: "I am always in you; around you...I am always in you, around you..." At last my soul surrendered completely to this inexplicable interchange of emotions and mutual pure joy. The happiness of God is beyond words, and beyond words is the happiness of a soul experiencing it. A wave was sucked back into the ocean...Body limits were wiped out, my half-opened eyes stopped looking, my soul melted into His embrace. It was pure merging of *ātman* and *paramātman*, a state of pure bliss, like in some books which describe *merging* after a long time of spiritual practice and penance...

After this experience I went over to the meditation tree and spent an hour more trying to come to my senses. With a time-lapse I tried

*SSG Oneness, Zagreb, Croatia*  
*Branimir Gonan*

## Greece

Sai Ram!!!

Greece's youth has acted in a very effective and disciplined way the last couple of months. They have been active in some national projects helping the seniors.

As you probably have heard this summer Greece has suffered the most destructive fire of the last 100 years; 90% of the forests in Peloponnesus have been burnt, people have lost their lives, their families, their homes...Sai youth have decided to not only gather food,

*NYC Greece,*  
*Evelina Gryllou*

to remember His face, but I couldn't! How come, I couldn't have been more close to Him than I was! And then – a wave of understanding; all the things I've read, experienced and learned, all came together to form a perfect picture.

The words that He has been telling me erased His form. His *sat-cit-ānanda* which He bestowed upon me for a moment is a proof of His teachings of non-duality and oneness of a Divine spark with the flame of Love. His Grace wiped out all the tears that I've shed and satisfied longing of one man for His physical presence...oh, Baba, thank You for everything...!

It may sound like an empty phrasing, but it surely isn't - at the beginning, when I asked Him about our big group, if He was satisfied with us, He inhaled deeply, exhaled while closing His eyes and blissfully said: "Veeeery happy".

Really, we are all exceedingly blessed, and as such we have to confirm, day by day, "the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God."

Om Ūri Sathya Sai Babaya Namaha

clothes, utensils and literally everything these people need, but also have gone to plant new trees.

In another area of Greece youth vaccinated, took care and fostered stray dogs and cats. Almost 50 stray dogs and cats have been adopted by families.

Also the youth from Athens along with the seniors visited for Christmas a centre for disabled children sang Christmas Carols and praised the Lord's name.

### Swami's Birthday

This November the Sai Youth of Serbia actively participated in preparing the Birthday programme in our country. The topic of the programme was Sai Baba's teaching seen through the lenses of different religions. Swami's words were followed by a short quotation from Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam, and every quotation was then illustrated by a short play. There were Arjuna and Krishna discussing the purpose of life; Buddha giving the key to the peace of mind; St Sava, a 12 c Christian saint and Serbian prince who renounced the throne to become a monk transforming a bunch of thieves solely by the power of his goodness that radiated from his heart; and a story from Islamic tradition, about the secret of happy living.

There were between 150-200 people in the audience who encouraged the actors with their applause and beaming smiles on their faces. The birthday celebration was organised in a well known hotel in the centre of Belgrade.

The spirit of unity was tangibly present, and all felt that any effort put into spreading Swami's message pays a hundred fold.

### Seva Activity

On December 28, the Youth Wing of Sathya Sai Organisation of Serbia in Novi Sad organised a traditional New Year's seva for the street beggars.

Small packages were formed for the children and people who sit on the pavements of Novi Sad, begging. The packages contained warm gloves, woollen caps, warm socks, fruits, sweets and toys. We also had some cushions, warm clothes and hygienic packages for children and babies.

It was a very cold day so also hot tea was distributed. The previous year we distributed

cooked meals, but because of the low temperature this year, it was not possible to keep the meals warm. We are sorry we could not make photos of the moments when they received the packages; it somehow seemed out of place to take photos then. But their faces were beaming with gratitude.



One of the beggars said: "I can hear Jesus speaking, but no one believes me". Perhaps it was really his imagination or empty talk, but the way he looked at us when he received our small gift touched us very much, and we hurried to a near by bakery to get him something warm to eat. He didn't want to eat, saying that he would keep it for his two small daughters. We then gave him two packages for his two little girls, aged 5 and 7. We know that this will not save anyone's life situation, but it was so clear that it was our love and caring that mattered, both to these people, and to us.

We saw one lady with a small baby giving some clothes to a beggar,

And some people gave money-we felt so happy that we were not the only ones, as the streets were full of people hurrying somewhere, not paying much attention to anyone else.

We wish all a Very Happy New Year!

Sai Ram.

*Ex NYC Serbia,  
Branislava Lagumdzija*

## Slovenia

### Swami's Birthday Celebration

Almost all our centre members went to Prashanti Nilayam and joined other Sai devotees from the Balkan republics in decorating and birthday singing program. However, few youth members who stayed in Slovenia have dedicated their energy to prepare Birthday celebration in Sai center Ljubljana. Many good news came from ashram, and we felt as if we were also there, under the umbrella of His Divine grace. Members in Kulwant Hall were decorating mandir for many days. Evening before Swami's birthday they made decorations with fresh flowers. At the same time we were decorating and preparing our Sai center in Ljubljana. When we finished, around 11 p.m., mobile message came directly from Prashanti Nilayam saying that they have also just finished with decorating at the approximately same time. We were so happy when we realised that we were decorating simultaneously.

Since almost all our members and regular visitors were at the time in ashram, we didn't expect many people to come at the Sai centre for Swami's birthday celebration. However, about 80 people came and most of them we have never seen before. They were all interested in Swami and enjoyed the special program. It was inspiring as always.

### Seva Activities

After Swami's birthday and during the Christmas season, we had seva activities. Almost every week we visited an older homeless lady who lives in the trailer in the nearby forest. In the

*NYC Slovenia,  
Tina Hribar Trifunović*

previous newsletter I described all about her. Now I will focus only on what was actually done.

**24th November 07.** Local community promised to give her briquettes (pressed sawdust) for the winter, since she has no electricity and heating. But that promise was not fulfilled. So we concentrated our efforts on sewing and chopping other wood material that the neighbors brought her. We kept visiting her every week after that to see if she already got the briquettes from community, and everytime brought her something, whether food or blankets.



**20-21th December 07.** The weeks went by, but the promised briquettes were still not there. Just standing there with her for five minutes was enough to feel frozen fingers. So, we ourselves went and bought her 90 kg of briquettes. She was very happy. We again sewed and chopped some more logs that people from her neighborhood brought to her. We were all very happy. For us it was the best possible preparation for Christmas – the Christmas spirit at its best.

## Spain

### Satsang with the Youth during the National Retreat in Spain, Tenerife – 7th December 2007

During the national retreat, youth members along with the adults present shared and interchanged many uplifting thoughts and ideas.

The satsang started with two youth members sharing their experiences at the World Youth Conference that took place in Prashanti in July. They recalled how motivating it was to see so

many participants from all over the world gathered together for one sole purpose; how fortunate we are to have this Organization and Swami's inspiration as a transforming tool; the fact that as youth we must be well prepared for the future. This implies learning from the experience of our elders and contributing with enthusiasm in all the future projects that are there for us. We must be living examples of Swami's teachings.

Our National Coordinator mentioned that we are very valuable to this Organization and have a very important role to play. Many times it seems like as if the youth members are not present, but even though we may be dispersed sometimes, we play an active part in the activities at our centres and at a national level. He encouraged us to get together in a constant manner and finally give the necessary push to this wing as we have all the potential to do so. From here, there was a strong motivation to soon find a regional youth coordinator in the Canary Islands; this will then aid the communication with the mainland.

*SSOO Vice-president Spain,  
Raksha Mahtani*

### **Informal Meeting with the Youth of Tenerife, Friday 28<sup>th</sup> December 2007 at the Camacho Sai Center**

The national Vice-Coordinator, the Coordinating Committee of the Canary Islands along with area Coordinators of the centres, arranged an informal meeting with the youth of Tenerife on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> December. There were a total of 16 youth and 8 adults.

The purpose of this meeting was to encourage youth to take part in service activities. This was done by a PowerPoint presentation with photographs of activities done since 2001.

As a result, two Coordinators for Tenerife were proposed by Felisa Pineda, Coordinator of the regional committee, Vinod Mahtani and Gina

*Secretary of the Regional Committee Canary Islands,  
Sajini Daswani*

Also, there was emphasis placed on how we can actively participate with the youth in our zone. From here comes, the proposal of finding an appropriate date to organize a retreat with our zone youth coordinator. Getting together, both mainland and Canaries will help motivate us all.

One of the youth also mentioned that sometimes in the groups/centres there is not much support or a lack of assistance and this discourages everyone. When this happens, the best is to approach all the members, we can and should count on the coordinators of the Coordinating Committees, on the National Youth Coordinator, etc. and express these feelings to see how to come about the situation and improve on it. Here both elders and youth stressed on the importance of a constant flow of communication.

The satsang was very positive for all and helped us have a clearer vision to take the initiative of participating more actively, the strength of working as a group and make the most of this opportunity.

Danshinghani. They were accepted unanimously.

Raksha talked of the future projects for the youth and two of them offered their service for translation, one is also interested in attending the EHV classes to get trained and start a new group of EHV classes in Puerto de la Cruz. A keen interest was also shown in the formation of a musical group to spread Swami's message through songs (LASA).

The response was generally good and a second meeting will take place on Jan 12<sup>th</sup> 2008 with the Las Palmas youth.



## Switzerland

At our National Meeting in November we started a Study Circle about the First Speech from the World Youth Conference 2007 from our Sri Sathya Sai Baba. We discussed questions like: What means Humanness? What are my experiences of being a Human Being? Everything in the world consists of the five elements. What are these five elements? Am I in the balance of these five elements? How can we enforce our discrimination? We also discussed how we could be more active as a group, instead of just talking about seva or activities. So we organized a Cookie-baking-session as a Seva for the Swiss Sai Organization. At the 1st December six of us met at one of the Youth's house to bake four kilo Cookies for the Christmas Celebration of Switzerland one week later. We had lot of fun kneading five different kinds of dough and cutting out different shapes. After the "hard work" we enjoyed the evening with a traditional Swiss Food. Our two Indian Sai Friends had the pleasure to eat Raclette: Potatoes with melting cheese. The whole German part of Switzerland celebrated Christmas at the 9th December in Basel. The topic was "Say Yes!" Say yes to your duty, get aware of your Divinity and live a life in the Humane Values. The Sai Center of Basel showed us a played about Jonas from the Old Testament of the Bible. During the day the Youth Wing looked after the children, who could do

some handicrafts. They made a black house with colored windows and lots of gloss and glitter. All children of the different ages were very concentrated on doing their handicrafts and it was a pleasure watching them.



Four of our Youth went to the Love all Serve all meeting in Divignano instead, which was on the same weekend as the Swiss Christmas celebration. It was again powerful, energizing and very instructive. It's always a bit like coming home and a heart-warming feeling to see what we can do together and to share and listen to the thoughts and experiences of the European Sai Youth.

*NYC Switzerland & Swiss Youth,  
Leila Mastronardi & Martina Hellmüller*

## Agenda

19. - 20. 01.2008: NYC, Vice-NYC and Zone 6 Youth Coordinator visiting Sai Centres, Croatia (National Event)

12.01.2008: National Youth Meeting, Zurich - Switzerland (National Event)

16.02.2008: National Youth Meeting, Zurich - Switzerland (National Event)

16. -17.02.2008 **Love All – Serve All Project**, Pescara - Italy (International Event)

## 22nd November 2007 Sri Sathya Sai University Convocation

The future of a nation depends on its youth. The strength of the youth lies in their spirit of patriotism. The primary duty of the youth is to render service to the society. The physical and mental strength of the youth is the foundation on which a nation is built. Wake up from the slumber of selfishness and narrow-mindedness and resolve to serve the nation. Perform all activities keeping the esteem and honor of the nation uppermost in your heart.

*Baba*

It is unbecoming of the youth to forget divinity and the goal of life, and to waste time in physical and materialistic pursuits. The youth should express human qualities by cultivating noble character and by rendering service to the society. They should understand that the well-being of the individual lies in the safety and security of the nation.



*We offer the fourth edition of the Zone 6 Youth Newsletter at the Lotus Feet of our beloved Bhagawan.*

**JAY SAI RAM!**

SSO Zone 6 Newsletter: 4<sup>th</sup> edition  
Editor: Saja Svilar  
Publisher: Zone 6 Youth Wing  
Zone 6 Youth Coordinator: Ivan Bavcevic  
z6youthcoordinator@sathyasai-zone6.org  
January 2008