

Point of Light

Quarterly Newsletter of the Molena Retreat Center, USA



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 Sunday, March 02, 2008

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1. Rev Master's Ashram Anniversary Message

Rev. Master graciously agreed to be videotaped as he relayed a message to the abhyasis of the Americas gathered in October to celebrate the 15th anniversary of the Ashram Inauguration (see article below). The tape was played for the participants during the gathering. The message was brief but full of His blessings for continued benefit of the ashram in our spiritual lives:

"Apart from the great deal of money we have spent on building the Molena Ashram, you must realize what amount of love has been spent on it, apart from physical effort by all of you. It would be a shame to allow this investment of love, effort and money to go to waste if the Molena Ashram is not used fully. I am happy you are all congregating there for the 16th Anniversary, and wish that you would all continue to support it by your physical presence throughout the future years. Blessings to all of you."

- Satkhol, September 25, 2007

2. Molena Ashram Anniversary Celebration

The 15th anniversary celebration of the Molena Ashram inauguration was held October 12th - 14th. It was attended by 450 abhyasis from across North America. The program, **"Point of Light: From Ember to Full Flame"** celebrated the beginnings of the ashram in the mid 1980s and guided participants into a contemplation on the purpose and use of ashrams. Abhyasis took part in a "walking meditation," in which stations were set up throughout the property, providing historical information and pictures, along with



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- Rev. Chariji, Molena Ashram Anniv Message, 2007.

■ **ASHRAM WEB SITE**

[Click here](#) to go to the Molena Ashram Web site.

■ **WEEKEND SCHEDULE**

7:30 PM Saturday Satsangh
 10:30 AM Sunday Satsangh

■ **ASHRAM OCCUPANCY RULES**

1. Possession of alcoholic beverages, tobacco and drugs in any form is **TOTALLY** prohibited.
2. Possession of any lethal weapons including knives with blades longer than 6" is banned within the ashram campus.
3. Visitors must have the prior permission of the management if any stay on the premises is involved. Overnight visitors not allowed.
4. No pets or other animals should be brought into the ashram campus.

■ **EXTENDED ASHRAM VISITS**

The Molena Ashram is open to all abhyasis for personal retreat time dedicated to spiritual practice. For information and permission forms for ashram visits lasting more than a weekend, [click here](#). Scroll down to "Downloadable forms."

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quotes and reflective questions about why we have an ashram and what our hopes are for it in the future. A Saturday evening special program featured a "story time," where abhyasis shared personal ashram memories.



The highlight of the weekend came with a phone call from Rev. Master, in which he gave his blessings to proposed plans to expand the ashram facilities. He said he would review the proposed plans and approve one of them. Participants heard a presentation on plans and discussed ideas with the planners. It was a joyful weekend of remembering the past and looking ahead to the future.

3. Celebration of Rev. Lalaji's Birth Anniversary 2008

Rev. Lalaji Maharaj's birth anniversary celebrations were held at the ashram Feb 1st-3rd, attended by approximately 200 brothers and sisters. The focus of the gathering was on developing a condition of spiritual craving in our hearts in preparation for the planned visit by Rev. Master to the U.S. in April. The theme was "Prepare to Receive", and talks and discussion delved into how one prepares the heart to be able to receive the Master in the true sense of the word: not only receiving what He gives, but more importantly to receive Him truly in our hearts, with love. That preparation continues and we look forward to the April gathering in Cleveland, knowing that His presence will certainly be with us, whether or not he is able to attend physically.



4. Schedule of Upcoming Events in Molena Ashram

March 2: Extended Sunday Program: The theme for the program will be "The need for clarity", and the weekend activities will be organized by Huntsville Center.

March 9: General Body Meeting.

March 22: Atlanta Center in-town gathering.

April 6: Extended Sunday Program: Organized by the AMC. Focus on work projects. Look for details on organized work projects that will take place that weekend from Friday until Sunday.

May 23-26 (Memorial Day): Family gathering (no formal program; activities for children; family and friends welcome.)

June 8: Extended Sunday Program: Organized by Jacksonville Center.

July 24-27: Rev. Chariji's birth anniversary celebration.

Note: We invite regional participation in the Extended Sunday programs. If a regional center would like to organize an Extended Sunday program, please contact Sis. Kadambadi Sai at kadambarisai@gmail.com . Centers located at a distance from the ashram may choose to begin their program on the Saturday evening of the Extended Sunday so that the program can be completed by noon on Sunday, leaving sufficient time to travel home.

5. Ashram Expansion Project

The Molena expansion committee is currently working on the details of the project plans. Further communications on the project will be sent out soon.

Please [click here](#) to view a presentation prepared by the Ashram Expansion Committee, which includes audio clips of Rev. Master's comments about the project.

6. Water Conservation at the Ashram

In keeping with ongoing efforts toward good management of resources, water conservation is on the agenda for the ashram expansion project. In choosing products for conventional water fixtures and devices, the consumption of water will be a serious consideration. Priorities will be set by the budget, however, with available funds first meeting the needs for the construction. After that, money will be used to implement products that support water conservation either as part of the current construction project or in the near future. It is an expensive proposition and we can plan for it in the near future, depending on the budget that remains.

Br. Dilip has invited abhyasis to participate in the research of water conservation supplies. If you are interested in being part of this research, contact Br. Rogerio Santos at rsantos66@gmail.com . To view a brief PowerPoint presentation on successes in water conservation efforts at the ashram so far, [click here](#).

Meanwhile, abhyasis are encouraged to be thoughtful at all times in their use of water at the ashram.

7. The AMC Team

Sis. Jennifer Freeman has recently left the AMC after serving on the committee diligently for over 3 years. Her contributions over these years in the areas of program development, communication and scheduling at the ashram have been invaluable. We sincerely thank her for all the hard work and enriching programs that she helped create and facilitate at the ashram.

The newly expanded AMC consists of the following members:

Sis. Teresa Valentine: Program, Communications, Children & Youth

Br. Venkatesh Mahalingam: Accounting, Safety & Security, Facilities

Br. Niranjana Jonnala: Grounds, Kitchen, Cleaning

Br. Khepi Allen: Ashram Expansion, Administration, Seminar Logistics, Maintenance

Please welcome the new members and contact them with any suggestions/ideas that you may have.

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