

Collaboration

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Group photo of AUMers by Roderic Aarsse

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AUM III

Five a.m. in a Boston apartment. I awoke with the roar of an air-conditioner in my ears and a dream about Auroville just slipping away into the New England dawn. I thought of California and put on a purple t-shirt with Mother's Sanskrit OM splashed across the front. All-USA-Meeting III.

As the 747 lumbered down the runway toward the Back Bay I switched my mind on to 'Om Namo Nama Sri Mirambikaiye, Namo Bhagavate Sri Aravindaya' as I have done for years at every jet ascent and descent, partly for protection, partly to bring me closer to Them in case of a catastrophe I could easily imagine. I fly scared.

On the way to Chicago, thoughts of the two New Hampshire AUMs circled around my mind. Last year's gathering had been more relaxed, more personal than the first year's, but we still had not resolved the tension around the felt need to organize, to accomplish, to forge some kind of national identity for ourselves.

American Aurobindonians have no charming, robed leader with an organization attuned to increasing the fold; we don't wear saffron and saris; there are no institutes of Supramental yoga, no one who can out-bounce Mahesh Yogi's meditations; all we have, in this country at least, is each other, our books, our fragile centers where we meet, and our mailing lists of names, each one with a story. After two years of East Coast tales, I looked past the stream of human traffic in O'Hare to new faces and voices in the West.

Aptos is a small, New England-esque town (except for the tiled roofs and semi-tropical vegetation) just off the freeway and the Pacific Ocean. Driving into the Monte Toyon conference center, it was clear that the redwoods had gathered here before us. One house had been built around a massive trunk shooting up through the front porch. The trees clustered in tight circles, speaking of ancient matters just out of human ear-shot, magnanimously absorbing the frenetic energy generated by AUM social life. Emerging from meetings, my eyes found rest in their smooth, prodigious trunks, then instant awe in their altitude, the green tops far above in the sky that stayed blue all through the conference.

That first day in the unexpected, coastal California coolness was hugsville—AUM as family reunion and gathering of the clans. Familiar faces, some with more lines and grayer hair, swam out of the redwoods' shade and the names came easily, lovingly. There were other faces where the names did not come readily, but, as one of them, Prem Sobel, told me, "...something strikes you inside. You feel like you know these (new) faces better than the people you may see every day at your job."

That evening, in small groups, came the stories: a woman who could not stop crying for over an hour when she first heard Mother's recorded voice; two boys who recognized the Psychic Being's hint in each other way back in a 7th grade classroom, became friends, and found themselves among the first settlers in Auroville. The room and porch of Monte Toyon's main building bubbled with talk until the time came to move our bodies into group statues, tunnels, and mazes. That night, sleep came easily—no air-conditioner's gale—the redwoods' deep breathing outside the window.

Mornings at Monte Toyon began with meditation and *Savitri* readings at 7 a.m., then another meditation from 9 to 9:30. Both sessions were held in the small chapel on a hill above the camp

buildings. The hexagonal room, graced with flowers and photos of Mother and Sri Aurobindo, looked out on the upper reaches of the redwoods, like a spaceship hovering above the valley, filled with silent pilgrims listening to Sunil's music and watching the morning sun slip through the leaves.

Working groups, from 10-12 a.m., brought us down to earth. I roamed around, pretending to be a reporter, listening to the land trusters and fund raisers. Those who facilitated these meetings were well-prepared both in ideas and structure-more so than in previous AUMs. There was a combination of interest in the topic and skills with which to present it that worked effectively. Decisions were reached and goals set. Writing in September I know that more follow-up work has been done than at previous meetings. I also think that we, the participants, have more realistic expectations of what can be done at a three day gathering. AUM III did a better job of balancing our need to be inspired by and connected to each other and our quest for organization and coherent effort.

The planning group of AVI-USA had wisely left the afternoons open. The first full day featured a meeting with the Aurovilians present to hear the latest developments in India. Otherwise, AUMers were seen talking in pairs or clusters, playing volleyball or off to tennis, being stretched by Larry Jacobs in Hatha Yoga, going through the slow motions of Tai Chi, and hiking up into the woods and out to a viewpoint from where the Pacific lay spread out in the distance, and you could almost see the Matrimandir.

At night we did see it in well-received videos of Auroville by Alain and Patricia, followed by surprise gifts of beaded pouches made in Afsaneh's Kottakarai workshop, glittering beaded containers of Auroville earth that we hung around our necks. Other night-time events included a discussion on "Sri Aurobindo, The Mother and the Triune Path" led by Paul Molinari of San Francisco and David Wickenden of Washington DC; a slide show on the Matrimandir by Seyril Schochen; a multimedia meditation (slides of Ashram paintings and Mother's photos accompanied by a reading of The Mother by Paula Murphy and Brian Walton of Wisconsin; a slide show and discussion of art by Gene Maslow; and a bonfire with music and devotional singing.

Then later, before sleep, in the dormitories among new-found roommates, there was the sharing and giggles that are a part of camp life, even a yoga camp. With each new addition of AUM the threads between us grow more taut. Step-by-step we move closer together in personal, more understanding ways, move together as we who are small parts of a great epic must move. Though there are no more Darshans with Them in the physical, we can only try, as Jeanne suggested after the first day's meditation, to share with each other the darshans within us. At AUM III, many individual, outward boundaries dissolved into little moments of darshan, when two people vibrated on the same string that led beyond both.

Gordon Korstange

Plan to Attend AUM '88 which will be held over the July 4th weekend

Sri Aurobindo Association

The non-profit organization that publishes *Collaboration*; that sells books and incense from the Sri Aurobindo Ashram; that channels donations from the USA to Auroville and the Ashram; that sponsors events such as the All-USA Meeting; and that has an office in High Falls, New York, has changed its name from Matagiri Sri Aurobindo Center to Sri Aurobindo Association.

This has been done to end the confusion over the name Matagiri which was given by the Mother to the land and mountain where Sam Spanier and Eric Hughes first began the work we carry on. They continue to have Darshans there, and to run a retreat center. From now on, "Matagiri" refers only to that center, that land in Mt. Tremper, New York.

The Sri Aurobindo Association is a group of people who come together in different places in the Northeast for gatherings, work and events connected with the yoga of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. Along with the activities listed above, the Sri Aurobindo Association hopes to help, with its resources and information network, individuals and groups in the Northeast who would like to sponsor retreats, lectures, gatherings, and projects. Sri Aurobindo Association encourages your participation, your company, and your ideas. Our address is still:

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The Place of Mother in the Supramental Yoga

by Chitta R. Goswami

The Mother has said categorically, "What Sri Aurobindo represents in the world's history is not a teaching, not even a revelation; it is a decisive action direct from the Supreme."¹ Some other thinkers have spoken of the possibility of man's evolution into a higher type of being, but none else has spent the greater part of his life for the actual working out of the superman. Sri Aurobindo's work, therefore, carries a tremendous significance.

The Mother was actuated by almost the same ideas even before she met Sri Aurobindo on the physical plane in 1914. Rishabchand has shown in his book, *The Divine Collaborators*, through a comparative study of the entries in her diary (*Prayers and Meditations of the Mother*) and the writings of Sri Aurobindo that the two were inspired by an identical mission. The first meeting of the two persons is an interesting event. There was no exchange of words; the Mother had all kinds of ideas about transforming man and society; as she saw Sri Aurobindo she recognized him as the divine Being whom she was led to call Krishna and she took her seat silently near his feet and emptied her mind of all predilections and thus opened herself entirely to him. For the first time she attained complete Silence—Nirvana. She also realized beyond all doubt her mission to work by the side of Sri Aurobindo for bringing down the Supermind.

What exactly is this Supermind and what does its bringing down mean? Supermind is the Real-Idea, Creative Genius of the Absolute which makes the ordered manifestation of the cosmos and evolution possible. In the Indian tradition no attention has been paid to collective evolution. Individuals have been urged to take a flight into the Silence or the Beatitude of the personal God beyond the range of the mind, but no idea of activating the divine verity in the texture of the body-life-mind complex and transforming it as a tool of evolutionary progress was entertained. Those spiritual disciplines, namely, Tantra, which aimed at *mukti* (liberation) as well as *bhukti* (enjoyment) attempted to make the body a strong receptive vehicle, but even in them the idea of collective amelioration is missing. On the other hand in the West in an earlier period they spoke of the Kingdom of Heaven and in modern times of an ideal society—socialistic, democratic, utopian—implying thus always a general collective advancement. In Sri Aurobindo and the Mother we see a reconciliation of the two—a collective progress on the basis of individual spiritual transformation.

The two western thinkers who are well-known for their prophecy of supermanhood—Nietzsche and Teilhard de Chardin—could not think in terms of genuine spiritual transformation. Nietzsche urged people to have the 'Will to Power' the exact meaning of which is controversial; Teilhard saw the Divine hand behind the forces of evolution, but he, too, perhaps because of his western upbringing, did not see the need of individual's realizing spiritual oneness with the rest of humanity, he banked on mental realization of unity and collectivization of life and society. Ordinarily 'spiritual' means mental, cultural, intellectual in the West, but in the writings of Indian thinkers like, Vivekananda and Sri Aurobindo 'spiritual' is what pertains to the spirit, i.e., to another dimension of consciousness and reality. Supermind is not heightened or deepened mind, it is a consciousness of another range in which all-comprehending unitive vision is inherent. Consciousness is force, Supermind is



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supreme force. It is through the release of this force latent in us and the descent of this force from its pristine level that the work of transformation of body-life-mind has to be achieved.

Collective life on earth has not so far been governed by truly spiritual consciousness. In China and in the West it has been governed by certain ethical ideals, in India it was looked upon as only preparatory to spiritual growth (consider the stages and aims of life). Perhaps time was not ripe for a thorough overhauling of collective life. It is in the modern period with the progress of technology that ideas of building a perfect and equitable society have come up with persuasiveness, and attempts have been made to reform or revolutionize old societies. These ideas emanated mostly from the West. Sri Aurobindo's response is a corrective to the overly externalistic thinking of the West. Sri Aurobindo asserts that external organization by itself cannot achieve anything great. The crux of the problem is in human nature; that has to be changed. Education and **socio-political** set up surely influence human behavior, but only on the surface. That is why no system so far has succeeded in solving any of the human problems. The Mother says, "The age of Capitalism and business draws to an end. But the age of Communism is also going to pass."² A third and superior system can evolve only through a deeper change in human nature; and a radical change of human nature can come only through Supramental transformation.

The Mother is supposed to incarnate the Supermind. So says Sri Aurobindo:

"Her embodiment is a chance for the earth-consciousness to receive the Supramental into it and to undergo first the transformation necessary for that to be possible."³

The gate to the supramental transformation of man and society is through her. In addition to the utterance just quoted, two other things deserve mention. One, the arrangement that Sri Aurobindo made for guiding the disciples. The Mother was put up as the Guru, they were to receive things, material and spiritual, from her. It is interesting that disciples would address their letters describing their daily experiences to the Mother, and Sri Aurobindo would look over them and comment on the margin. If Sri Aurobindo is the Supramental Avatar, the Mother is his executive agent. As the Mother once said,

"Without him, I exist not;
Without me, he is **unmanifest**."⁴

In *Savitri*, the epic poem which is a spiritual saga, a definitive and sublime expression of the inner structure of the cosmos, it is Savitri, the incarnate Divine Mother, who bears the burden of separation and death and ultimately brings down immortality to her human husband. She does that having pressed into service the very dark design of the god of death.

The mother-figure, the dynamic divine, has been considered by the Indian tradition, Tantra in particular (**Śaiva**, **Śakta**, **Vaiṣṇava**; each sect has its *Āgama*, the other name for **Tantra**), as the Creatrix. From that point of view **Rama**, Krishna, and all other avatars are children of the Mother, so also Sri Aurobindo. But Sri Aurobindo is lucky enough not only to be missioned by her but also to have her as an incarnation for the fulfillment of his mission.

It is well-known how the Mother continued to work for the supramental transformation after Sri Aurobindo left it, strategically, half-finished to work better from the subtle physical plane freed from the gross physical frame. She has given hints of her **herculean** task in the "Notes on the Way" published serially over a number of years in *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Center of Education*. The full 'Log' that she maintained has been published, with the title *L'Agenda de Mère*, in thirteen volumes by Institut De Rechercher Evolutive, Paris. This will surely be hailed as an extraordinary document of a superhuman effort at changing the whole material base of human nature.

*Supermind is not
heightened or deepened mind,
it is a consciousness of another range
in which all-comprehending unitive
vision is inherent.*

It is, however, a fact that the Mother also has left her work incomplete. This is never to be understood as a personal failure. Completion of the work demands a consent and cooperation of the entire world. In the words of the Mother:

"However great, however conscious, however powerful an Avatar may be, he cannot all alone realize the **supra**-mental life on earth. It is either a group in time, arranged in a file in time or a group spread over a space-perhaps both-that are indispensable for the Realization. I am convinced of it."⁵

Spiritual progress toward higher consciousness can be made by following any recognized path. But supramental **transformation** for evolutionary progress does not seem possible without knowing her and graced by her. She is, we have reasons to believe, working relentlessly for the next evolutionary leap forward, and it is our privilege to cooperate with her.

*The gate to the
supramental transformation
of man and society
is through her.*

Notes:

1. *The Mother on Sri Aurobindo*, (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1961).
2. *The Laboratory Notebook* (entry, dated March 21, 1956) a one-volume condensation of *The Agenda* brought out by Institute De Rechercher Evolutive, Paris, 1977.
3. Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library, Vol. 25, p. 49.
4. *The Mother on Sri Aurobindo*.
5. *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Center of Education*, August, 1962, p. 73.

Mystic Eyes

by Lynda Lester

Van Morrison did a foggy and dangerous song once called "Mystic Eyes."

Well, I went to the AUM conference and my eyes got mystic. I wasn't being a gypsy, I wasn't being strange; I was just hanging out in jeans and a turtleneck, going to meetings.

It happened right in rude and hungry America, home of Egg McMuffins and freeway gridlock—mystic eyes, mystic perception opening like vision in the dark.

I wasn't even trying.

I was trying not to, in fact.

I. The Forest

What happened was, I decided to take a walk. So I started hiking up the trail—past the kids in Morris dorm slamdancing off their beds, past Silverthorn Chapel, where Larry Jacobs was conducting a class in hatha yoga, and into the trees.

The forest was a secret world of tangled groundcover, wild thickets, and underbrush. Giant redwoods massed together, three and four and five trunks joining at the base and growing hundreds of feet straight up. Logs and stones were shrouded with moss; lianas trailed from branches overhead. Far above a green canopy let through a dappled yellow light.

It was an ancient and enchanted realm, pervaded with a brooding presence. The path was alive. It forked in five directions and became a maze, shifting and changing under my feet, leading me by whim.

I picked up a walking staff and my strides grew longer. I climbed a steep ascent and sped along the trail without getting tired, beginning to feel very strong. An intense power was permeating my legs and arms, coming into me from the earth and from the forest on all sides. It was the strength of enormous redwoods, of genesis and manifestation.

I was astonished. I had come to AUM weak and exhausted, torn to ribbons; I had spent months in battle with morbidity and death.

But now there was a song rising from deep inside me. It was a song of eternal youth, a song of peace; a wide shining song that sang itself.

And striding along the path, staff in hand, I noticed a curious transformation. My Nikes were gone. My J.C. Penney clothes were gone. The person I'd been all my life had vanished, dissipating like morning fog.

Only remained mindless, incorruptible Life, the purity and effortless grace of Nature.

And as the force grew, everything in the forest became a single integer: Her. She walked on the trail, She stood in the dark and silent redwoods, She lived in every leaf and fern.

Here Her work had gone undisturbed. This cathedral, this inhuman grandeur, was Her inspiration; She had fashioned it, through love and miracle, for one purpose: to give, as surrender and offering, to Him.

And then I understood the power of the Mother. And I knew what it meant, to let Her do.

And it came to me the many things that had been said that day on the relevance of Auroville. Peering into the mystic depths of the wood, I knew what that relevance was.

I saw here a sanctuary of earth-truth, besieged on all sides.

And I saw, around it, the West: an electrified, microwave regime of yellow-brown skies and toxic waste, carcinogens and contaminated streams. And I knew the West was killing the earth; the West was dying.

Salvation would not be found in more titanium buildings, more blind bulldozers or new hot reactors in space. There could be no high-tech panaceas, no solutions from a way of life lost to truth.

The answer would be found in a place where truth was remembered, where sincerity was the ground of being; someplace where they cared about trees and earth, where She could work her miracles unhindered by ego and the disease of ignorance.

AV cared.

In Auroville they care about the trees. In Auroville She walks.



Afsaneh with the "gift" she designed.

Photo by Roderic Aarsse

II. The Gift

On the second day of AUM the Aurovilians were making oblique remarks about the "surprise" (a peculiar, pointed something-or-other) that lay, mysteriously draped in a sheet, on the table at the front of the assembly hall.

That night after the panel discussion, they made their move. "This is a gift from Auroville to AUM, with love," they announced, and with a flourish, like matadors, pulled off the sheet. There on the table was a three-foot-wide, three-dimensional lotus with graceful petals curving upward in layers. On the petals were written words of the Mother. And tucked inside the petals were seed-bead necklaces—each with a square beaded pouch on the end with the Sanskrit letters MA on one side and OM on the other; and inside each pouch, a packet of red, Auroville earth.

Delight went leaping out of the lotus and shooting around the room. Eddies of it rippled in the air, enveloping us with a sort of thick, intoxicating gold. We were amazed.

We went crowding up to the flower. There were iridescent rose-red necklaces, necklaces in brown and white. Trembling, I picked out a pink one with pale blue Sanskrit characters.

Drifting back to our seats, we thought about the hours that had gone into beading the necklaces, the care and solicitude; and the love between AV and America began to sing over the inner wires, the relation growing stronger and more tangible, bonding like Crazy Glue.

It was a moment when people spanning the globe were aligned, in harmony, in touch; a moment that spoke the promise of a world to be.

III. The Glimpse

Then Patricia and Alain premiered the video of the Matrimandir they'd done in June 1987.

My heart broke when I saw it; the force that came into me was so strong my heart exploded.

EKGs would have shown a cardiac arrest.

Ah... more bliss than I'd ever thought, more bliss than a human can stand; it hurt, it was so strong.

And as I watched, enthralled by the landscape, trees, and sunset on Matrimandir, time shifted. I was in the future. I could see people walking hand in hand, and they were all in the new consciousness; Matrimandir gardens were the gardens of the new earth.

It wasn't a thought perception. I'd hopped through to another place, and could feel it with my body.

The consciousness had density and substance, it was tangible; like chewing a solid piece of homemade wholewheat bread.

It was material truth, material beauty, material love; it was in the individuals and in the atmosphere and in the ground. The transformation had happened.

And I remembered what Mother had said: "If you can't conceive of something spiritually, its realization will take a long time. But if you can already taste it, if it comes and expresses itself in your experience—even if it doesn't stay—that means realization can't be too far away."

If we can have experiences like this in the heart of prime-time, Pizza Hut America; if such experience can come to those of us raised on Mickey Mouse, TV dinners, and Top Forty radio; then perhaps the truth is not so distant as it may seem, and it may not be, after all, such a long millennium before the work is done.

IV. The Love

Meanwhile, I was afraid to go to meditation. I'd had my brains blown out a few months back in a terrifying occult accident, and I didn't want to even glance sideways at another plane of consciousness.

So timidly, the first morning, I had approached the glass-walled forest chapel and taken a chair just outside the open doors.

The incense was heavy in the air. Flowers were lavish on the altar. Sunil's music was playing. And the atmosphere was solid aspiration, straight psychic tuning. Ah. I started starving for India again. This kind of thing just doesn't walk the streets of America, it's rare; this generic, ground-of-being spirituality is what is missing in the U.S.A.

It was getting prettier and prettier; a presence was coming down so lovely and good, washing me like a rain shower. When the meditation was over I walked away drip-dried and radiant like the Sunmaid Raisin girl; and it was all right.

The next morning I dared creep inside. I could see right into Mother's and Sri Aurobindo's eyes. They were smiling. I got happier and happier.

Then the love came.

It swelled up from beneath, from the side, stealing in in waves, each one bigger than the last; it surrounded me and expanded with a convective force. Currentwise, it grew: a selfless, infinite-circumference tidal love, rolling out into the surrounding forest until it became the land.

And I sat there, lost in an earthly love, a love that was the earth, looking at the people with their closed eyes and bowed heads.



AUMers under redwoods

Photo by Nandini Gray

It was the third day of the conference. I had met someone like fire, full of grace and sweetness; and someone deep and rich and weathered with an incredible force. I'd seen someone like the evening star, misty with a tenuous diamond brightness inside; and someone whose soul danced like a spark from the sun. I had met someone secret and soft who kept laughter hidden in a treasure box; and someone startling and brilliant like frangipani and dew.

The love, intimate and universal, exclusive of personality, held them all. And taken by a sweetness that was impossibly beautiful, I knew that someday love would multiply, waken, know itself, and move matter.

After the meditation I went outside. The moss was green and the trees were green; there was gold on every pine needle and twig on the path, and gold coming out of my face. I glided back to camp like a hovercraft, two inches above the ground.

V. The Vision

The last night of AUM I crept up to the bonfire, feeling a bit lonesome and desolate, like a small wild animal from the woods. There were the flames burning bright and yellow and tall, and people sitting round in rows.

I spied an open spot on the other side and settled in, very near the blaze, to gaze into its secrets.

Beneath the fire lay a floor of embers, a whole jeweled city: the walls and arches and battlements, the tiny streets and curving ways, and the marvelous buildings, all glowing with subtle shifting heat, changing light like emotion.

Above the jeweled city, flames were consuming the logs and dancing up to the black night sky, crackling and popping.

Up in the sky were all the stars.

Around the clearing were the dark black pines.

And there we were, the body of AUM, in the burning brightness, in a circle of force and light.

Love was moving around the fire too, I could feel it: warm, rich, and unexpected. It seeped into my body and made it golden, infusing cells with a richness like soma wine.

And as I stared into the fire I understood what Mother had said; but I understood with all my being, with my body and atoms, and not the mind: *This human hour, this earthly hour is the most beautiful of all the hours.*

And I saw this secret, that it is in matter that the Divine becomes perfect... The Divine grew perfect before me; the Divine was material. It was the same experience that had come with the film of the Matrimandir: truth manifest, the Supreme on earth to touch, to love, to know.

And suddenly two doors opened in the center of the fire; the fire broke open and I had a vision. It was the future, and it was joy. It was, as Sri Aurobindo had said, a paradise of the richest flames, a paradise of rapture beyond the thought of mind.

I started laughing; laughing and laughing, trying not to laugh too loud; and I knew the dreams would come true, the promises be fulfilled.

VI. The Fire

Truth recreates itself by a leap from one soul to another, like lightning flashing from sky to earth, electrons jumping orbit. When you meet someone in whom Agni is awake, it kindles the recognition; the flame leaps from heart to heart, spreading like fire because it is fire.

The fire is force and light; it is the energy whose action is pure, the power whose action is truth.

The fire catches when you meet people who are putting themselves on the line, who have gone through it all—indelibly perseverant souls, battle scarred and ravaged but still kicking, who clamp down with their teeth like snapping turtles and won't let go.

The fire moves as will; the fire moves as love. It's a love that holds you like the song you've always known; like seeing home after centuries gone. It comes with an ache and a sweetness, enough to saturate you with joy.

And afterwards it burns, it burns; it burns absolutely, with a fixity of purpose, a fervor. It doesn't go out; it doesn't die.

Shining Agni was moving at the AUM meeting, Mother's force was working.

And now the fire has gone abroad. Our lives have changed.

Letter From AVI-USA

by Jack Alexander

The redwoods are hosting another group this week, but for four glorious days they were home to a very enthusiastic cross-section of Mother's children. The various rooms and halls of Monte Toyon were alive with celebrations, brainstorming, searching, as well as just being together. We had dances, panels, videos, meditations, bonfires, walks, meals, work groups, and teas, all under the magnificent, witnessing redwood trees.

The conference was designed to cover as much as possible and still keep enough time for precious visiting with old and new/old friends. The scope and breadth seemed to some to be too great and there was even some protest at the combination of various individuals and groups that have coexisted on the planet for years but never mixed in a coming together like this before.

The one thing that seemed to be on everyone's mind or lips was the amazement with how the conference was an example of unity through diversity. The event was so many things to so many people simultaneously, but the residing feeling was that Mother was in the driver's seat and Her theme for the conference was "An Experiment In Human Unity."

From the early days of the planning of the gathering, the overwhelming sense of those involved in the nuts and bolts preparations was that the meeting had a life of its own. Even if we didn't get along or see eye to eye temporarily the plan rolled on, gaining momentum and clarity of purpose. It was as if this was Her assembly and all She needed was a willing assemblage. The metaphor of Mother in Her garden came to mind more than once.

In this case I feel the garden was clearly an American one and may have been misunderstood by those of us in the larger international community as somehow diminished due to the blurring of interests and alliances, rather than an enlargement due to the synthesis of yet another wondrous paradox. The gift that was given to me, and I feel to many that came together over time and space, was the overcoming of something more difficult to travel beyond: our inner separations and limitations and the voice of prudence whispering in our ears.

Perhaps this is one of the unique gifts of this bit of geography known as America. Mother has indicated that each country brings to the global community in varying degrees, according to their group soul, a part of the perfection manifest in the world. It seems to be second nature for the Americans to get along with each other as it seems to be second nature for the French to risk the outer unity in favor of what seems to them to be the higher truth of the matter. Both are truths, conflicting at times, but necessary aspects to master in our collective and individual journeys toward perfection.



Jack Alexander (standing far right) at opening session.

Photo by Gordon Korstange

To Have Been In Auroville

To have been in Auroville! This is how we felt when, at Aptos, we said "Good bye! We shall meet again some time in the future."

This year, when about 80 of us gathered from across America and the Oceans, a great aspiration welled up "to renew old friendships and make new ones," to simply be with each other before Mother and Sri Aurobindo. They, whose presence was so pervasive during those intense days, in Their compassion gave us the experience that the Dream is well alive, here and there, that Auroville is anchored in Their consciousness of which we are a part—no matter the limitations, mistakes or omissions—anchored in our collective psychic's aspiration to be "the willing servitors of the Divine Consciousness," to be the instruments of Their work. The happiness, joy and laughter that manifested in so many ways have been, as it were, Their signature.

"One who is hidden in Light
would grow visible, multitudes linking,
Lyres of a single ecstasy,
throbs of the one heart beating . . ."

Sri Aurobindo

From the peaceful physical setting of the redwoods in the Santa Cruz mountains to the simplicity of lodgings and food; from the spontaneous unfoldment of the encounter to the collective meditations; from the videos on the Matrimandir and Auroville's communities, from the slides on Mother and Usha Patel's illustrations of chapters of *The Mother* to the offerings of healing, hatha yoga, Tai Chi and the sing along, as well as the Aurovilians' precious beaded gifts of the red soil; from workshops to individual sharings, all told of Their Promise that They are with us and "victory is ultimately certain."

What has been "achieved" does not really matter; what matters is the becoming. Auroville already exists and needs only to manifest in time. The vision was shared again beyond words, in that part of our consciousness where we are one, untouched by Maya's illusions, beyond time and space where burns the flame of the heart putting before the Eternal the need of the world to evolve, the need of man to become divine.

Yes, wherever we have been, we have suffered, each in his/her own way, particularly from the struggles of the last twelve years, some more than others. But who can measure the secret depths of suffering or assess what is lived on so many levels of consciousness? It has not been easy . . . The hour has come to gradually put the past to rest, in the acceptance of what has been (no matter how hard it has been), to let *Them* heal our wounds, to look towards the future, in the patient waiting for Time to do its work. No doubt, many of us at Aptos have felt this, very strongly.

In India, we are gathering energies and making supreme



Opening Session

by Gordon Korstange

efforts in the face of the dangers of a political unknown and other innumerable odds and difficulties of the adventure. In America, some 200 of us dispersed across the continent, mostly in clusters on the East and West coasts, to try to bridge distances, isolation and financial gaps, while endeavoring to understand better what this is all about, what we are doing here. She said: "I need workers in America" . . . How can we learn better and better work for Her? How can we learn *here* to be true Aurovilians and children of the Mother? How can we better help financially? And comes to mind other words of Hers: "What you should do is to inform people about Auroville. That is important." (Nov. 1969). Yes, we have to learn how to manifest the new things. We cannot learn alone, here or there. Wherever we are, we need each other. We need Auroville whole.

All of us—in Auroville—are borne by the winds of change sweeping over the world, bearing at the same time the responsibility of our doing, thinking and being, which ripples across Bhumi Devi. Isn't it that in some mysterious way They bear the burden of the world through our acceptance? In the silence of the Matrimandir garden, one lies in peace, not gone, more with us than ever, whose life tells it likewise.

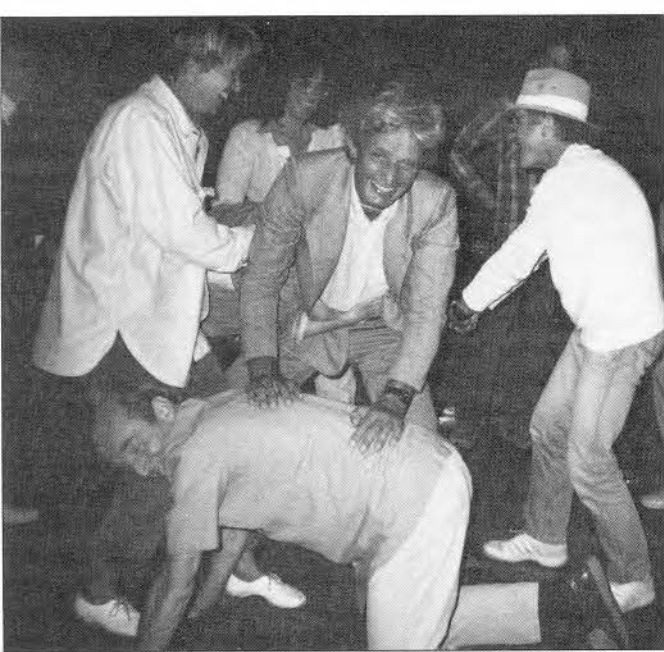
As we take the road again, back to India or to the other end of the States, renewed and strengthened, we may look at the image She upholds before us of the new race:

who can laugh at life, discovering its quietness;
who can laugh with life, discovering its purity."

To have dreamed the dream of the Dawn in Auroville. and known that such dreams are true.

Jyoti Sobel
Sunnyvale, California
July 1987

EDITOR'S NOTE:
 Pages 10-11 and 18-19 carry
 the closing remarks from
 participants at the AUM.



Ron Jorgensen, Fredric, Shyama, Rebecca and Savitra
Photo by Nandini Gray

Friendship reaffirmed
 renewed
 established

Next meeting more for newcomers perhaps.

Seeing my spiritual aspiration reflected in so many radiant beings.

This is my first Aurobindo group-meeting.

It was an interesting experience to meet once again old friends from Auroville.

Tapas

AUM '87

... To share the grace coming down with others aware
 ... To receive the love from others giving
 ... To feel the growth of adoration within
 ... To Him and Her

Many Thanks to Everybody,
 Rebecca

Bhajans and Redwoods,
 Friends and the Flute—we are here!
 Her love, Her Light, Her Power
 Our talk, Our silence, Our gratitude
 Sunlight and Joy
 AUM, Home, Mother—we are yours.
 Bryan Walton

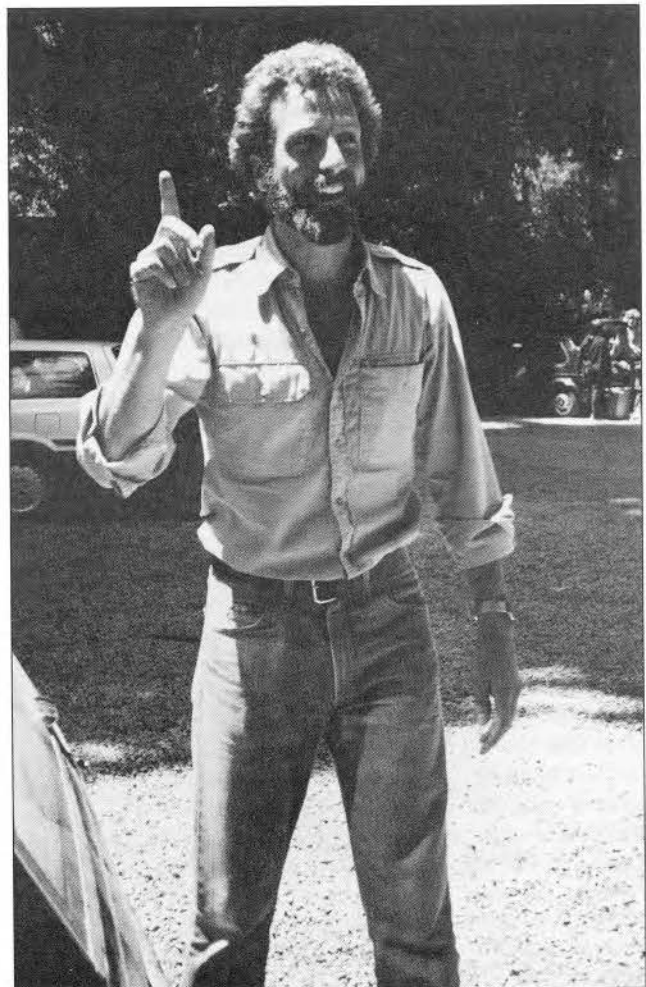
I just would like to recall what I said last year only with more optimism:

Let us make a pledge to go to Auroville and light a bon fire near the completed Matrimandir on February 28, 2000.

Vijay

The beauty of the surroundings, the beauty of the people and the joy in knowing that the dream is alive and is manifesting in the hearts and action of the people at the meeting gave a deep joy that was shared by all.

Mario



David Wickenden

Photo by Lynda Lester



Anie Nunally

by June Maher

Mother has told us "I am with you." Every person who arrived at this gathering brought Her. Each day as we looked into each other we saw Her. We blessed each other with Her. Now we can say Mother I am with you.

Jean

Gratitude to Her for light in dark times.

Savitra



Seyril Schochen

by June Maher

New horizons, new faces, a lot of openness, a glimpse of true fraternity here and there.

Beautiful organization, I really appreciated Jack and Mary's attitude as selfless yet proficient visible organizers!

The Dream of Auroville is still alive and America's energy is essential to realize the Dream.

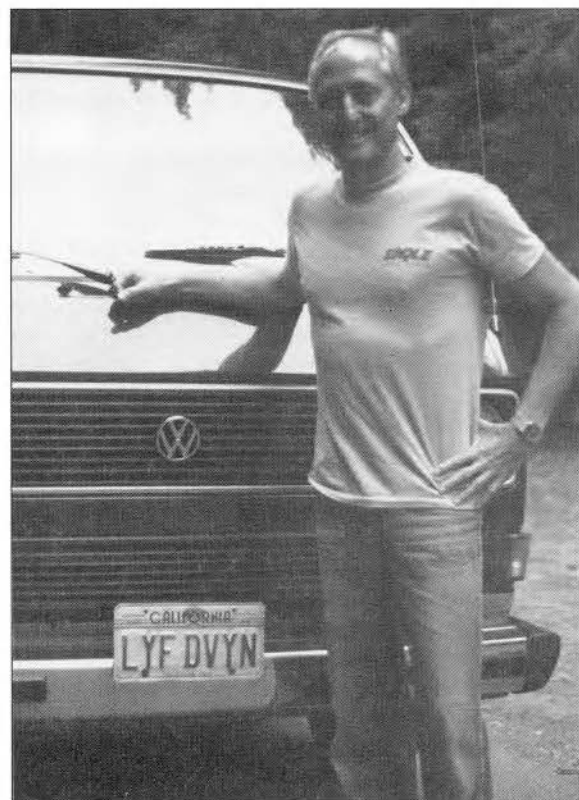
I see this meeting as a starting point towards a unifying process.

Thank you for bringing us together,
Alain A. from Auroville



June Maher and Alan A.

by Roderic Aarsse



Larry Jacobs

by Jean Korstange

Editor's Note:

The following articles on AUM are summaries of the discussions of various small group sessions on specific topics.



L-R: Vidya, Larry Tepper, Constance, Clark Bell, Anie Nunally
by Nandini Gray

AVI-USA Workshop

by Paula Murphy

I see AVI-USA as a communication network, a channel through which funds and information can flow between the U.S. and AV, and a structure which will enable Aurovilians and supporters of AV in the U.S. to participate in the building of AV.

The framework of AVI-USA is not cumbersome or complicated. It is light, flexible and based on open communication and sharing of information. We in the U.S. are spread over great distances thus the emphasis must be on keeping communications clear, consistent and frequent. We are in the early stages of our Collective Yoga. Some very important ground work has been laid. There is sincerity, trust, willingness to work and many successful projects underway. The challenge is to expand the network, open opportunities for all who are interested to take up the work, to shake off the old, restrictive forms and emerge strong and clear.

Following are notes from the AVI-USA small group meeting held on Thursday, July 23. It was foggy and cold so our group gathered by a stone hearth, warming ourselves by the fire as we talked.

We began by describing the current structure of AVI-USA. There is a board of directors who meets monthly and shares information and work on various projects. Much time is spent by the board doing clerical tasks. There are also voting associates, a category of membership whose

role has not yet become clear. The question arose as to why this category is needed. Why not let any member who is interested participate in AVI to the extent they wish? It was felt the way to go at present is to stay with the two types of membership but remain open to change.

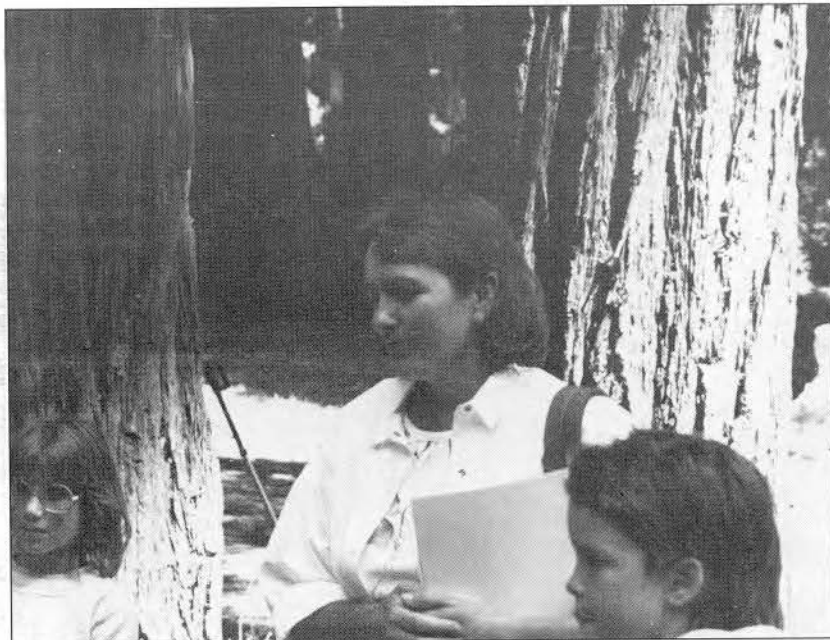
The concept of AVI-USA as an "embassy" of AV was discussed but no agreement reached. An embassy is an extension of the government of the home country and has no autonomy. AVI-USA has many autonomous functions and its own independent decision making body.

We then made a list of problems/opportunities for growth which we now face. They are as follows:

1. The framework or structure of AVI-USA is shaky. It lacks clarity of purpose.
2. What are the best ways to disseminate information to members?
3. We need more people actively involved in the work.

With this list before us we looked at some ways to move through the obstacles. The structure was discussed and these suggestions made:

1. Have conference calls the last Sunday of alternate months (6 per year) to serve as a communication link between members in distant locations. For these calls to be efficient and effective, agenda items must be submitted 4 weeks before a scheduled conference call. An agenda will be mailed to potential participants 3 weeks prior to the call. Those wishing to get in on the call must notify the office and indicate which agenda items they are interested in. The cost of the call will be born by participants except in the case of board members which will be part of AVI's budget.
2. AVI-USA now has the capability to make use of a computer board as a means of information sharing. Board members in distant locations are especially encouraged to make use of this. When the computer board becomes a reality it will be announced to the membership.



Paula Murphy, Aurelia Walton and Crista Murphy

by Nandini Gray

3. There should be a paid clerical/accountant person at the Sacramento office. The job description will be clear and specific. This person will attend board meetings in a non-voting capacity and be under the direction of the AVI president and/or secretary. Having this work done by a paid worker will free the board for other work and expand the scope of their action.

4. The structure of the board was discussed and clarified. There are currently several openings on the board.

Treasurer: in charge of fundraising and capable of fiscal planning for the organization.

Secretary: must attend the board meetings in person in order to record the meetings and be able to communicate the goals and activities the board wishes to carry out.

Members at Large: responsible for heading a committee or interest group such as student exchange, health, etc.

We covered a lot of ground in this meeting. The discussion seemed to revolve around the themes of creating an organization which has integrity, is accountable for all funds it handles, and provides opportunities for harmonious, dynamic participation in the work of Auroville.

AUM Workshop on the Relevance of Auroville

Held Wednesday morning, July 22nd, 1987 on the lawn outside Helgesson Hall. Facilitator: Constance.

"It feels like Auroville is facing a new beginning," **Constance** said to open the meeting. He focused the group by reviewing discussion points listed on the AUM handout sheets: 1. It's a good time to take stock of where AV has come from and where it's going. 2. What is the purpose of Auroville? 3. What do we expect for the development of the city? 4. How is Auroville relevant to the world? 5. How has the strategy, timing, and scale of the project changed since the Mother's passing? 6. Upon what basis can we obtain future support for the Auroville community?

There followed an hour-and-a-half exchange with people contributing a variety of opinions. Some excerpts:

Savitra: "The relevance and responsibility of Auroville is the state of the earth, not just the 600 people [that live there]. What was planted there was the seed of the new world—not a new city or community but the transformation of the whole earth."

Peter Callaway: "[For its purposes,] Merriam Hill pretends the yoga doesn't exist... It's sort of a pretend thing to do. We're dealing with students from colleges and universities who are initially interested in Auroville for other than spiritual reasons... It's possible to see Auroville as a culture, a group of many people coming together; it's trying to become another

way of living, that has patterns that can be learned. AV has constant relevance as a culture."

Sita Chettayar: "The ability to invoke is where the real Auroville is. When we invoke the Mother the most amazing things happen. That's Auroville... being with people who can invoke Her, maintain that intensity, feel the presence. Mother is very much alive—that creates AV."

Joel Goodman: "There's a lot of Auroville talk; It must be clear that it's a town, a physical realization, a structure. There's a potential for more AV collaborative realizations... It's alive, it's not stagnant, it's living. It comes down to the material collaborative process."

Michel Henry: "We must get away from the personality of Auroville to its true essence, to the AV role. The planet's at a critical juncture; Auroville holds out a great deal of hope... Auroville is like a greenhouse, something is happening there."

Paula Murphy: "The relevance of Auroville is that it's a long-term guidepost; it gives meaning to life in many ways. It's a touchstone. It's a reminder that there is another way, there is a vision, a physical place where what is deep in the heart can manifest. I'm glad that element remains alive and growing in the earth consciousness."

As the meeting drew to a close, Daniel concluded the discussion with a comment that seemed to sum up many of the views that had been expressed:

Daniel Brewer: "The real relevance of Auroville is as a point of invocation. Whatever successes have accumulated they are in direct relation to invocation. The people can be there or here, if they're on that level... "Auroville is a concentrated reflection of the world. There lies its value as a greenhouse or laboratory. It will succeed in proportion to the change of consciousness in the world, the input of consciousness changing around the world."

From notes by Lynda Lester



Mary Alexander and Savitra

by Lynda Lester

Healing AUM

Slowly the room filled with people who moved into a circle and began to introduce themselves. As we went around the room people described what their interest in healing was. For some it can be summed up by acknowledging that the physical body is the base for the supramental transformation. Body awareness and healing go hand in hand. Keeping our physical balance, especially at a meeting like this where we renew our bonds through our physical as well as psychic presence, is challenging. Others, who do healing work had technical terms for their art, i.e., acupuncture, hypnosis, body meditations, stress management, and opening the physical consciousness through colors, art, and music.

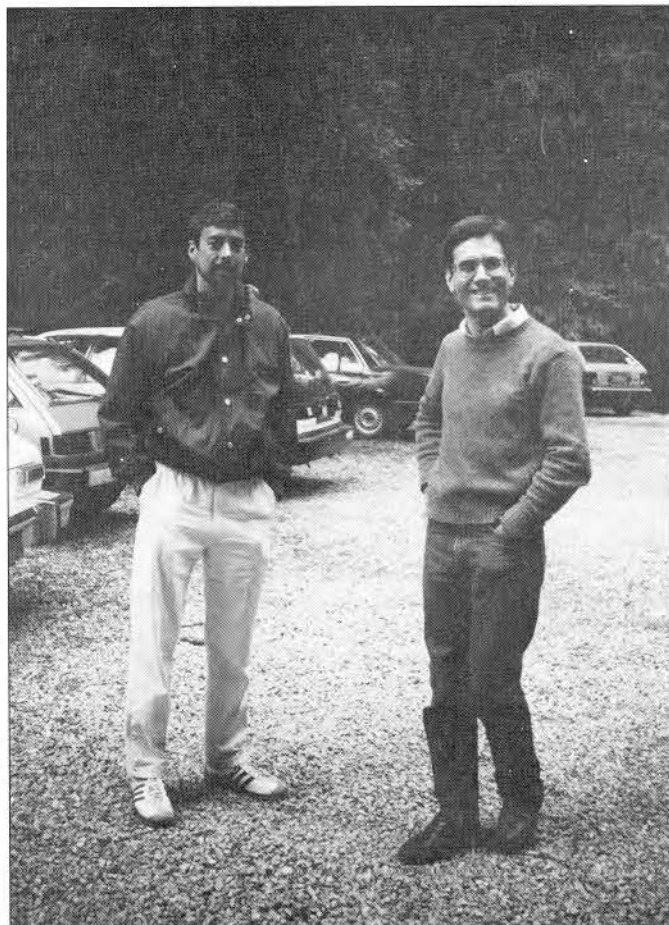
After that brief introduction the group moved into a meditation on the body lead by Andrea (Angela). Thus centered in our bodies we began to discuss the barriers to healing. The pain, fear and ignorance we all have in regards to our bodies when we are ill was present in one group member who was scheduled for chemotherapy the week after the meeting. Love and healing energy filled the room as we asked questions like, "Who's in control of the healing process?"

This question brought forth the barriers to healing. Doctors and alternative therapies can be seen to be in conflict or as a field of resources each with its own particular contribution for the body to return to its balanced state of health. In the state of sickness we are often guided by a medical picture that is technically complex and negative. Statistics and diagnosis sometimes make the restoration to health seem very far away from the present physical state. There comes the absolute need for peace and calm to be restored to the body. People gave examples of how a disease could lift by opening the consciousness to Sri Aurobindo and Mother. *Thoughts and Aphorisms* contains a wealth of inspiration for doing this.

We turned to Andrea who practices healing through massage, acupuncture, hypnosis and meditation. Her answer to who is doing the healing was that the feeling comes from the soul and spirit. She is inspired to pass on Mother's touch through her hands when she does massage. Mother's photo is in her therapy room but she does not speak about Her unless people ask. When people do ask she often gives them one of Mother's books to read rather than talk about her. Andrea feels especially blessed by Mother and this creates a special connection to healing guides who are with all of us. She believes that everyone can become aware of the healer in oneself. Andrea sees herself as an example of this awareness. The healing that she does with her own body creates a psychic awareness which can be a guide for others. She doesn't believe that she heals others. Her knowledge and awareness can guide others to their inner resources for balancing many aspects of the body consciousness. For Andrea, to radiate peace and healing is to bring people in touch with their own healer.

Other members of the group felt that they also were only a tool or vessel for an energy which can be used to heal the body. It is essential to get beyond the illusion of separation between the physical consciousness and the state of higher consciousness or oneness with the divine. Prem gave an example of how one can cross the boundary between these states.

While living in the Ashram he did healing work. One day a young woman with a young child came to him. He had a cold and felt unfit to touch her, thus unable to heal her. But she



Peter Callaway and Prem Sobel

Dorian

by Lynda Lester

walked into the treatment room and sat down on the table. He was in the other room behind a curtain thinking that he would have to tell her he couldn't help her. As he crossed through the curtain to enter the treatment room he felt his cold lift. He walked up to the table and placed his hands on the woman. As he did so he was aware that the child was guiding the healing. He began to follow the vibration from the child and thus treated the woman. When he finished he walked back to his room and as he crossed through the curtain his cold returned.

It appears that we do need others to stimulate us towards health and this works both ways. Those in the group who are working with the healing consciousness have the experience of this. Those of us who did not have such experiences learned how much courage and acceptance it takes to confront a physical crisis through the person who was facing chemotherapy. We witnessed the search for healing energy within the group and ourselves which would unite us with this individual.

We closed this first session on healing with another body meditation. As we opened our eyes to each other the physical peace and presence of Mother embraced us.

—From notes by Jean Korstange

AUM Auroville Update

Meeting held Wednesday afternoon, July 22nd, 1987 in Helgeson Hall. Facilitators: Aurovilians.

Alain and Patricia opened the show with "Auroville Presentation," a 37-minute documentary filmed in 1986. The video showed various aspects of work in AV today—check dams, afforestation, architecture, alternative energy, village relations, education, and farming. Included were interviews with Aurovilians, as well as some spectacular footage of the Matrimandir.

Fredric then took the chair. "This morning," he said, "we concentrated on the essence, relevance, and challenge of Mother's dream of Auroville. But there are also the physical realities, the ups and downs, the moments of joy and suffering. Some of the things that are happening could be summarized, we can share that factual information. . . ."

First, however, he brought up a special point. America, a land of wealth and abundance and adventure, carries a force, he said; messages from America are important for India and Auroville. He suggested the AUM conference send a greeting to Auroville because, "Auroville doesn't just run on its own. We are all part of its happening." All of us, he said, are connected to Auroville; what we feel Auroville can express. He suggested in addition that the AUM meeting send a message to the Indian government stating its support for AV. [See Addendum.]

Fredric began the update by explaining the visit to Auroville in August 1986 of the International Advisory Council. "It was like the moment of the foundation laying [i.e., 1968; a descent of Presence] . . . We felt that friends were suddenly among us. The minister for education said it was like his first experience with Mother; Mr. Tata was deeply moved. It was not a random date. A new phase was begun."

That phase involves developing a more cohesive and responsible internal organization so that Auroville can be worthy of the support and protection of the Indian government. Events have been dramatic and sometimes tense in the various approaches to defining this internal organization; but the best is being tried to be seen, the Truth form striven for. The thing to do is to leave it to Her and step aside.

Fredric discussed several possible outcomes of the expiration in November '87 of the 1980 Auroville Emergency Act. He concluded with, "Auroville is being seen as a trust for the earth; that takes it out of the proprietorship of even the Aurovilians."

Auroville is going from a period of consolidating and fighting off threats to something new, he said; so many new things are happening. The last year and a half there has been a qualitative change and more reaching out.

One of these outreaches involves education. The Sri Aurobindo Institute for International Educational Research (SAIER) is providing learning material on a national level for a government educational policy based on Mother and Sri Aurobindo's work (though not presenting it in that particular form); "The Aim of Life," a booklet compiled by Aurovilians, is being given to teachers' colleges.

One of Auroville's education projects has been to take a total of 150 children out of Auroville on kids' holidays for two-week periods in the summer.

Fredric then turned the meeting over to Savitra, who spoke

about the land situation in Auroville. The SAS still holds title to 2000-plus acres within AV's perimeter, he said. And, for the total acquisition and protection of Auroville land, many thousands of acres still need to be purchased. There is an infrastructure of houses, schools, roads, and forest on much of the available land; without the additional acreage, a coherent development and planning process is difficult.

In addition, the unsecured land is vulnerable to all sorts of forces—third parties use it to create extraordinary difficulties for Auroville; speculators wreak havoc on the price; there are political overtones; and dangerous chemical pesticides are being used in fields right next to the lands Aurovilians are trying to revive.

For these reasons, Savitra said, land acquisition is a priority for AV. There are many projects, but this is of a more comprehensive magnitude. It's not just a minor problem; it's the ground Auroville is on.

Millions of dollars are needed to liberate this piece of earth for the earth; the funds cannot come from India alone. Because of America's environmental awareness, this country could be a major resource for those funds; the U.S. has the potential to make that land available for Mother's charter.

Then Savitra discussed the US/USSR/Indian Youth Exchange projected for August 1988: Auroville, consistent with its purpose of peace and human unity, would host the event and provide field experience. Young people ages 17-22 from each of the three countries would come to Auroville for one month. (A Russian newspaper has been willing to publish an article about the event.)

At this point the group energy ran out and the meeting adjourned to Tai Chi, volleyball, and individual activities, such as trying to find some hot tea.

—From notes by Soleil Righter and Lynda Lester



Ron Jorgensen and Andrea doing Tai Chi by Roderic Aarsse

Letters to Auroville

The two proposed letters from the AUM meeting were sent. They read as follows:

Dear People of Auroville,

We, gathered together here at the AUM meeting in California, wish to declare our support and solidarity with Auroville and all of you there who have given yourself to Her dream. In these trying and often confusing times where even the next step is unseen, you have friends in America that stand together with you for the realization of Auroville.

May we be one in our aspiration and may the flame burn victoriously in our hearts.

With love,

(Signed) Individuals attending AUM



Bila and Shyama

by Nandini Gray

Honorable Minister Sri V. Narasimba Rao
Chairman, Auroville International Advisory Council

Dear Sir:

We, representing the individuals and centers in America dedicated to realizing the vision of Mother and Sri Aurobindo, wish to affirm in our annual meeting our wholehearted support and appreciation for Auroville and the hope it holds for the earth.

In these dangerous times when it is difficult to see where humanity is headed, Auroville stands as a point to rekindle our spirits and offer us courage that a new way can be found and we must try to find it.

We have seen over the decades the Aurovilians have persevered through seemingly interminable hardships and difficulties; and yet, despite these ordeals and the evolutionary growing pains of the planet, Auroville has stood firmly and begun to transform a desert into a garden where men, women, and children from East and West begin to discover in their daily lives the way toward the actual human unity.

In this statement of affirmation, we in America wish to express our deep gratitude and appreciation to India who has, in her wideness, given the chance for such a seed as Auroville to grow on her soil. May that seed be preserved. We here feel a great common destiny with India and from across the seas we say, "Bande Mataram."

Towards one earth and one humanity,

Respectfully,

(Signed) Jack Alexander, President, AVI USA

The centers of the U.S.

Individuals attending AUM



Nandini Gray

by Chris Gray

Sri Aurobindo Land Trust (SALT)



Dave Hutchinson and Bina Chaudhuri

by Nandini Gray

This trust was initiated because a number of people in the United States have expressed the wish for a common ground, a place to meet and come together on a regular basis, and perhaps collectively embody our vision of a Divine Life. The three AUM conferences are beginning to forge a closer link among us who are scattered across the continent; possibly SALT can bring our energies and funds together and help further that bond.

The purpose of SALT is to "salt away" enough money in a trust fund to enable the purchase of property somewhere in the United States, to be used as a retreat and (perhaps) residence facility for disciples of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. As mentioned above, the document is still being drawn up, so the definitive structure of the trust has not yet been determined. Still, something can be said about its nature and goals. It is intended to be a vehicle for the expression of the collective group of aspirants, and not the work or effort of a single person or a small circle. In this vein the trust includes provisions for voting by the members (contributors, as well as election of a board of directors to coordinate and manage the property and its development (once the trust reaches that stage). The money will be kept in a special account belonging to a non-profit corporation. When property is acquired it will be owned by the trust, not by any individual. The idea is to create a place that belongs to all of us; that can be the expression of our development as a community in whatever manner that takes.

SALT is still in the formative stages: A beginning draft has been made but much work still needs to be done. At this point there are several people working on the rewriting, but this does not mean that others would not be welcome—quite the opposite. We are looking at a period of months, or even a year, before the document is ready to be a legal reality. This is the time that is most important, for those who care about its future.

At the AUM conference this July, several people said that they had similar ideas or yearnings; there was much support and a lively exchange of possible visions concerning what form such a center might eventually take. In particular the dream of a healing center came up, as a place that would encompass the best of both western medicine as well as the alternative (complementary) healing arts. As for land, at the present time there is a development in Colorado, where Seyril Schochen is living, that shows promise as an eclectic multiple community encompassing many different groups related to spirituality. That is one possibility for the trust to consider; undoubtedly there are others around the country.

If anyone is interested in being informed of developments related to the trust, or would like to help work on its preparation, please contact:

David Hutchinson
Life Divine Center
1326 33rd Street
Sacramento, CA 95816



Satya and Auroson

by Nandini Gray

Thank you for the love. This meeting came from the heart. Let us continue to meet in love and communion.

This is our work.

Auroville is a State of Being and Praying.

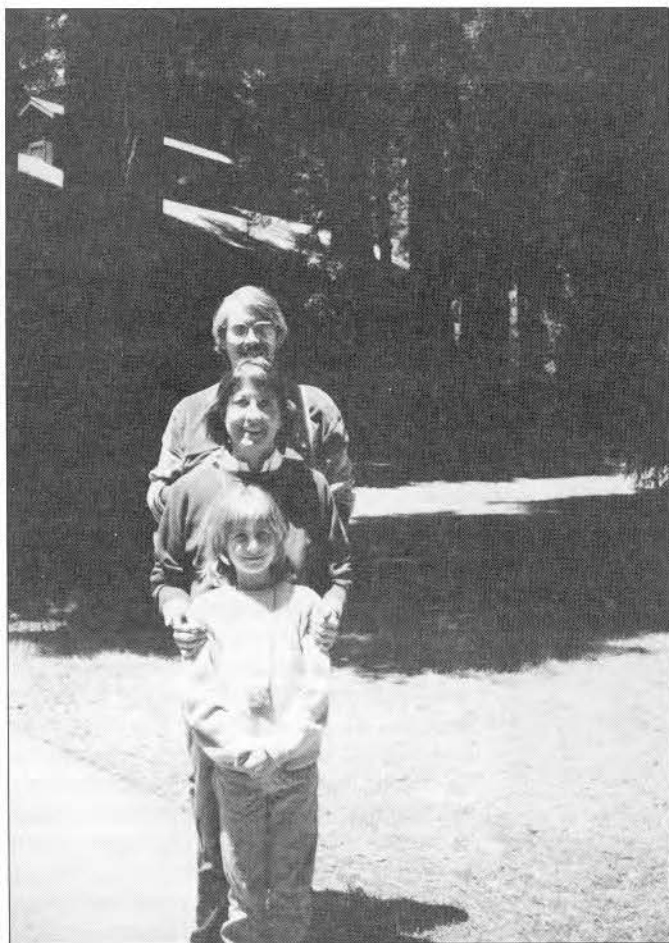
Fredric

My feeling at the end of these days is mainly gratitude. Without quite understanding how, I feel this has been an important grace for Auroville—from which a lot will flow in the future.

I would also like to echo with Frederick; that the intensity that is constantly born of our Need for the Change, that Fire, must always burn among us. "For those who are satisfied with the world as it is, Auroville obviously has no reason to exist."

Love,

Patricia



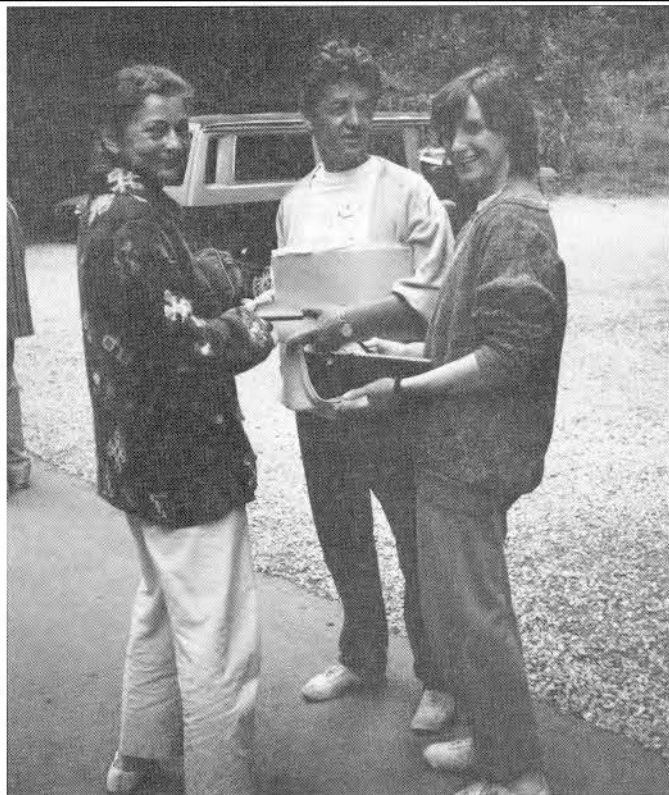
Bryan, Sally and Aurelia

by Lynda Lester

Remarkable to me was the gentle flow of energy for this conference both in preparation and during the time we were all together. It is always amazing what a powerful flow of love is generated at AUM. It is stronger each year.

I was encouraged by the variety of styles of workshops. Some wanted experiences. It happened.

Mary Alexander



Ghislaine and Robert Aarsse and Jean Korstange

by Lynda Lester

It was so great to see that Mother is so present—present everywhere! To see all the old and the new Aurovilians was an event for me. Time was so short! Please let us have more music next meeting! I will take all the pleasant love back to AV and spread it around.

All my Love to all of you,
Afsaneh



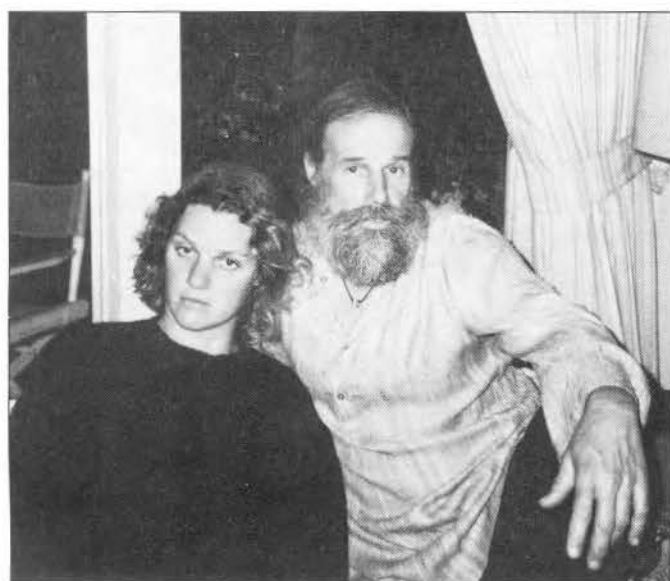
L-R: Donna Starkey, Constance, Gene Maslow, Rebecca, and Seyril Schochen

by Lynda Lester

I love the people—that's what I come for.

More respect for attention to the needs of people in groups—boundaries around time, a chance for everyone to speak, the acknowledgement of needs for breaks, stretches—just more attention to the collective health.

Suzanne Mc Donald



Daniel Brewer and Lisa

by June Maher

I felt a sense of the whole of the network as gathered in the U.S. I felt the light fullness expansion of Mother's work radiating through all the people here united for the Great Purpose.

Next year! Three full days with at least one day set up for task forces. These groups should be practical, problem solving, action oriented (i.e., bringing spirit into concrete).

Soleil



Michael Zelnick, Dick Hawk and Anie Nunally

Under the redwood trees
the place of darshan
was ourselves
to our selves
to our self.

Gordon



Chris Gray playing frisbe

by Nandini Gray



Vidya and Sita with Anie Nunally

by Lynda Lester

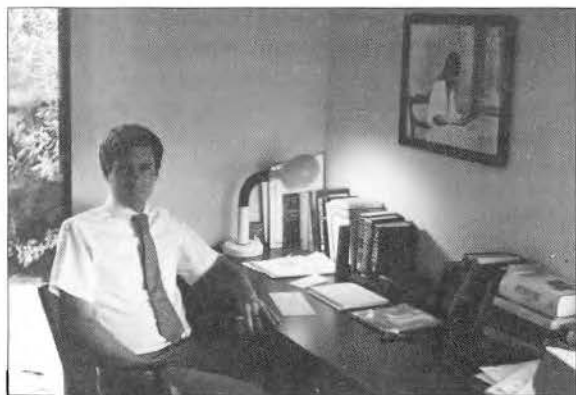
Meeting with aspiring people from around the world opens up many new pathways for Mother and Sri Aurobindo's Force to manifest and effect transformation through the collaboration of more and more people working on practical projects to spread Their Light.

INVOKE, INVOKE, INVOKE.
VIDYA

People

Miriam Belov will lead a meditation and Auroluigi will be one of the speakers at a seminar, "Creativity, Spirituality and Psychic Experiences in Art," which will be held at 2:45 p.m. on Sunday, October 25, 1987 at St. Bartholomew's Church in New York City. This seminar is sponsored by the American Society for Psychical Research. It will last approximately 2 hours. Admission for non-members is \$10.

Jonathan Breslow, a former resident of Matagiri, Mt. Tremper, is currently a homeopathic consultant in Ojai, California. Jonathan studied homeopathy in India and with Dr. Elizayaga and George Vithoulkas. He has written a highly respected correspondence course in homeopathy and enjoys teaching the homeopathic system of healing. Anyone interested in studying with him can write to him at P.O. Box 1686, Ojai, CA 93023.



Jonathan Breslow in his office

Trudy King, who has worked at the East-West Culture Center in Los Angeles and the Sri Aurobindo Center in High Falls, is now living in the state of Washington. She is studying herbology and gardening. Plans for the future include participating in the development of a new healing community which will be located on the site of a hot spring.

David Mitchell, Hunt Farm, Waccabuc, NY 10597. Tel: (914) 763-5616. David hosts a bi-monthly Sri Aurobindo study group at his house. The group met on Sunday, September 13, 1987 for a lecture and discussion with Rand Hicks from the Integral Knowledge Study Center in Pensacola, FL. Rand's talk focused on the supportive role a center plays in the creation of a climate which encourages and supports the emergence of the soul. He used his own personal experience from the development of the Pensacola center. The group closed with a meditation and focusing of their energy.

David and his daughter, Regan, will leave for Pondicherry on September 24, 1987. David will be at the Ashram for two weeks and Regan will stay through December.

C N Sharma completed his tour of the U.S. with a talk at the Matagiri Sri Aurobindo Center, on October 4, 1987. He has been associated with the Ashram in Pondicherry since 1948. In 1968 he was asked by Mother to write Sri Aurobindo's biography in Hindi. Mother also asked him to establish Sri Aurobindo schools and centers throughout India which led to the adoption of Sri Aurobindo's teachings on education by the state of Orissa. He has held seminars and given lectures on Sri Aurobindo throughout India.

Udar Pinto celebrated his 80th birthday in April this year. Many people in the U.S. may remember Udar from his trip in 1972 when he represented the Ashram for Sri Aurobindo's Centenary.

Alain and Patricia from Auroville were funded to come to the U.S. this summer on a search-and-buy mission. Their task: to upgrade the amateur AV video equipment. They planned to nab the goods in a secret, unmarked pro-video equipment store in New York. "It's so secret it doesn't even have a sign out front," Patricia said in August, visiting Boulder with Alain. "You just have to know it's there."

Alain and Patricia capture Auroville on film. They are historians, recorders of the ongoing sapling-to-forest AV experience.

Those of us attending AUM saw two examples of their work: a documentary called "Auroville Presentation" and a video of Matrimandir, both recently done. The films were inspiring and well received—even though Patricia apologized because their quality had deteriorated when they were copied for use on American VCRs. The new equipment will enable the AV team to make copies more efficiently with no quality deterioration.

Although the new equipment has been paid for, Alain and Patricia will have a continuing need for blank videotapes. "Raw footage must be edited," said Alain. "A half-hour documentary requires four hours of film—that's twelve 20-minute, or four 60-minute videotapes."

Videos of AV will be shot for both outside and internal use. They will be efficient vehicles for public relations, communication, reporting the news, preserving history, and meeting various needs of the moment.

We in America can benefit from more Auroville movies by helping supply blank videotapes for this work. If anyone is interested in being part of Auroville video (and the AV process itself) in this way, here's what to do:

Visit a camera store and ask for 3/4" industrial U-matic videotape. (Brand names: Sony, Ampex, Fuji.) Tapes will cost about \$12 for 20 minutes, \$20 for 60 minutes. Pop the tape in the mail to Videos, AVI USA, Box 162489, Sacramento, CA 95816. AVI will see that tapes reach Alain and Patricia, who will put them to use in this exciting and meaningful endeavor of documenting evolutionary change.



Trudy King in Washington

Center News

AUM MOTHER'S HOME:

50 Rang C, Wotton, Cte Richmond,
P. Quebec, Canada JOA 1N0
Phone: (819) 828-3132

AUM MOTHER'S HOME is the name of a new Center being born. A disciple, Marc Salvas, spent several years in the Ashram in the seventies and made several visits afterwards to the Ashram and Auroville. He felt an urge to devote himself to the ideal of the Mother and Sri Aurobindo.

On the 20th of November 1986, a house which had been a school until 25 years ago was bought. With a thorough cleaning, repairs and renovation, the house is being given a new look. All efforts are being made to create a building worthy of Mother's presence. Though the work is not over it is ready to start functioning as a Center of the New Age.

This new born Center looks on the world with wonder, it doesn't yet know its vocation, but by the Power of Mother's Shakti it knows it'll go through the obstacles upon the way.

It is located amid a forested and hilly area, a wild area where Nature showers her bounty of flowers, trees, animals and birds. Mother's children are welcome to visit and spend some time at AUM Mother's Home. Anyone coming from New York or Boston to Montreal should write or call for directions. The house is very conveniently located for people coming from the U.S.



AUM Mother's House

The Sri Aurobindo Association

P.O. Box 372
High Falls, N.Y. 12440
Tel: (914) 687-9222

The former Matagiri Sri Aurobindo Center group plans to meet over the weekend of October 3, 1987 to discuss new directions for the Association. They will also sponsor a lecture by C.N. Sharma who is on a lecture tour in the U.S.

September 20, 1987 is the "New York is Book Country" fair which the group has attended in order to promote Sri Aurobindo Ashram publications. This year the display at the booth will feature Ruud Lohman's book, *A House for the Third Millennium*. Patricia and Alain have been invited to do video interviews of people who visit the booth to take back to Auroville.



Alain and Patricia at AUM

by Roderic Aarsse

During the final morning session, Fredric addressed the participants of AUM. "We Aurovilians hope to extend to you in Auroville as much generosity, friendship, and love as we have received here," he said. "It's good to be in touch as we have been at this conference, and in situations like these we tend to be relaxed. But we must also remember there is an urgency, a dark and imperative side to the work. We must react with intensity and passion. There is a dramatic necessity for change."

Toward that end, Fredric suggested, America could help keep AV up-to-date on developments in the world related to the change of consciousness and physical transformation. There is a vast reservoir of information from which to draw in the U.S., while Auroville is more isolated from the media.

Last School will be setting up a permanent exhibition in Auroville showing how things Mother spoke of in the *Agenda* are being expressed in the world at large. The ongoing exhibit will document spiritual/physical evolution in all fields of human knowledge and experience.

America could participate by sending materials for display—in particular, visual documentation such as magazine articles, photos, and artwork, as well as music, taped talks, videos, and books. As examples Fredric cited a book on near-death experiences and a recent issue of *Life* magazine focusing on cellular research.

The exhibition will establish a link between the work of Last School and Mira Aditi Centre (AV publishers of the *Agenda*). It will result in stimulation and enrichment for the whole Auroville community, but especially for the young people, guiding them in their discovery of the work of Mother and Sri Aurobindo in the world.

A spacious, 400-square-yard building in Aspiration is available for the purpose, since the AV Boutique has moved to Bharat Nivas. The building will also house *Agenda* tapes for listening.

Anyone interested in participating in this effort should send materials to: Last School/Agenda Project, AVI USA, P.O. Box 162489, Sacramento, CA 95816. (Possible topics: new theories of time and space; discoveries being made in physics; planetization of human awareness; studies of altered states; advances in healing; aging research; new achievements in mental or physical capacities; and many others. If you find a particularly appropriate newspaper or magazine article, mail it off. June Maher will forward the materials in batches to Last School.)

East West Culture Center
12392 Marshall St.
Culver City, CA 90230
Tel: (213) 390-9083

The center just completed the purchase of buildings and land. The double lot which they found in Culver City has a large house and 22 by 24 sq. ft. building which can eventually be refurbished for use as a meeting hall. The move out of Los Angeles to a place where the center can take advantage of its surroundings as well as sponsor programs of Eastern Philosophy, psychology, healing, music and weekly meetings for Sri Aurobindo devotees brings a great feeling of joy and love to the center. Mother's guidance was felt as the center searched for a new location and her presence fills the house as they move in the books and furnishings.

The first program at the new center was held on September 5, 1987. S. Krishnamurthy from Bangalore, a lecturer for World Union, gave a talk. Krishnamurthy makes the connection between science and the spiritual in everyday life through his talks on Meditation and the Mind. Two rooms of the house were ready to receive guests for this program. The library, which is seen as the heart center for the house has a fireplace and wall shelving for the books. The living room which can hold about thirty people looks out on to the garden which is now abloom with bougainvillea for protection.

There are plans to landscape the grounds once the move into the house is completed. The center hopes to have a small group of Aurobindo devotees meet regularly for meditation and study of the yoga. Special programs will be scheduled for the coming year. The center wants to make a quarterly or monthly program schedule once the move is completed. All programs sponsored by the center will be free.

Sri Aurobindo Learning Center
P.O. Box 80
Savitiri House
Baca Grande, CO

Seyril Schochen began her first year of residence in Savitiri House at Baca Grande this summer. She established the Sri Aurobindo Learning Center on December 4, 1986 for a variety of educational purposes and cultural events. She wants to sponsor and host seminars, workshops, and courses which use the works of Sri Aurobindo and Mother as the source for the course content.

On August 23-29, 1987 Seyril taught a course for the Boulder College Summer Residential Program at Baca. "Poetry Making: Creating the Future Poetry" was designed to open poets to the reception and creation of mantric poetry, vibratory rhythms with the power to awaken consciousness, to a hearing of the voice of poetry which comes from planes of our being within, above and beyond personal intelligence.

Seyril also celebrated Sri Aurobindo's birthday on August 15th with music and meditation and a concert reading. On Sunday, the 16th there was a healing and transformational workshop "The Mother and Cosmic Consciousness-Yoga," "Sri Aurobindo and the Kaballah," by Havah Eshel and Seyril. An exhibition of the Mother's Agenda of Supramental Action Upon Earth was on display at Savitiri House during this weekend.

Seyril's future plans are to work with the Sri Aurobindo International Institute of Educational Research in Auroville.



L-R: Top row; Lalit, Manjari, Mr. Krishnamurthy, Mary, Mother, Prasun, Robert, Sri Aurobindo. Lower row; Mario, Denise, Michael, and Tom at the East-West Cultural Center on September 5th.

The project envisages an American and Indian experience in international education emphasizing value-oriented education for future teachers of the world. This teacher education program will be developed during this year.

Wilmot Center
P.O. Box 2
Wilmot, WI 53192
Tel: (414) 877-9396

The Wilmot center is actively working on development of an integral education school and is interested in hearing from anyone who would like to work with this project. Any information, teaching materials, or teachers who are interested in this idea should call or write the center.

The center recently sponsored the publication of an introductory book by Sri M.P. Pandit titled **Sri Aurobindo and His Yoga**. It is available through Lotus Light Publications, a division of Lotus Light Inc., which has sold incense and imported products from the Ashram and Udavi.

Living Within: Psychological Approach to Health and Growth by A. S. Dalal is another new publication which the center has sponsored and is distributing wholesale. The book focuses on psychological aspects of the yoga and how they can aid in the development and maintenance of psychological well-being. Both of these books are also available from the Sri Aurobindo Association in High Falls.

The Wilmot Center would like to produce a "yellow pages" for the Sri Aurobindo community in the U.S. Individuals are invited to send their name, address and interests for publication in a network handbook. Through this listing people could build creative new relationships and working arrangements with others in the community. People should write up a brief description or a statement about what they do in relationship to the yoga. For example, healing arts practitioner, study group leader, slide production of photos related to the yoga, lecture tour organizer, book distribution, handicraft business, teacher or other professional seeking ways to express the yoga through their work, etc.

This idea originated at the AUM conference. People felt it would provide a basis for exchange of information among the entire community. It would at the very least offer moral support and encouragement and create an awareness of our personal resources within the yoga. It may encourage the development of study groups by spreading the awareness of their existence and facilitate the gathering of individuals in various geographical areas of the U.S. It should help individuals to become more involved with each other. Thus it would facilitate the development of the community of Sri Aurobindo devotees throughout the USA.

If you are interested in having your name in the Sri Aurobindo network yellow pages write to Santosh Krinsky at the Wilmot Center.

*Merriam Hill Center
2067 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge; MA 02140*

People interested in participating in an experiential program for observing whole systems within the context of Auroville should contact the center in regards to their education program titled, **Understanding Auroville**.

This program is coordinated by Peter **Callaway** for 6 to 10 people. The group departs from the U.S. on January 5, 1988 and returns on January 29, 1988. The program begins in Madras on January 7 where the group will get acquainted and tour Madras. There will be an introductory program about the philosophy, history, environmental and educational projects of the community. There will be a few seminars and optional trips to other places in India. Participants will have the opportunity to volunteer their services to the Auroville community through agricultural, business, construction, and service projects, or other areas which they may be interested in.

*Willow Gold Farm/Global View
Rt. 3, Spring Green, WI*

Global View will complete another summer of festivals presenting the arts and crafts of Asian Countries with its October 3rd and 4th Himalayan Holiday Festival. Of special note to the readers of **Collaboration** is Brian Walton's report on the Festival of India. With the assistance of the University of Wisconsin in Madison, **Gobal Views** was able to present a Bharata **Natyam** Performance, Indian Folk dancing, Carnatic vocal and veena accompanied by a mridumgum and an informative presentation of the Camatic style of music.

Marion Nelson is happy to announce that she will be able to visit Auroville during her annual trip to Asia. Her tour, which has been successful for the last three years, is fully booked and she looks forward to establishing a home base in Katmandu by renting a flat for the duration of her tour in Asia.

Brian Walton and Paula Murphy presented an audio-visual meditation at the AUM in California. It was based on slides from the book **Love Treasures** and the Sri Aurobindo Ashram Library paintings by **Tessa** and slides from the Delhi Ashram of Mother. Brian showed the slides while Paula read from the Mother. Those who attended the presentation felt that they had been blessed with darshan and experienced the beauty and light of the yoga in a very artistic and creative way.

Brian Walton will continue his work with audio-visual meditations and would like to offer his services for making slides from photos. He is able to produce good quality slides of

pictures of Sri Aurobindo, Mother, the Ashram, Auroville and photos from Ashram Publications. He will do this work for cost and wants to maintain a collection of slides related to the yoga for everyone.

*~Auroville International USA
P. O. Box 142489
3112 'O' St.
Sacramento, CA 95816*

AVI-USA, this year's coordinators for AUM, report that there's a new California phenomena called post-AUM syndrome. Board members and meeting organizers took sometime to "come down" from the experience. There has been a wonderful response from participants at AUM which manifested in an office party, i.e., five people working together to do organizational work at the office. Prem Sobel's expertise on the computer was particularly beneficial to moving the work along.

September was dedicated to electing new board members. There are seven positions on the AVI-USA board and only three people officially tilling those positions. Paid members of the organization were asked to nominate themselves to the board and ballots were sent out to the voting associates for electing new board members. The current three member board asked that people living in Northern California take the positions of president, secretary, and treasurer in order to facilitate the meetings from the office in Sacramento. Members living in other parts of the U.S. were encouraged to be on the board and attend the meetings via conference calls. It was hoped that a new board with seven members would be in place by October.

The board is considering the recommendation from the AUM fund raising committee to hire a professional fund raiser. **AVI-USA** has set as a priority, fund raising for the Auroville Land Fund. Efforts are being made to streamline the office and expand participation in the organization through conference calls and a computer modem to take advantage of electronic notice board and fax machine type communications. They also hope to find new ways of getting information on Auroville out in the U.S.

Anyone interested in taking out a membership with AVI-USA should send an address label and the appropriate fee to the office in Sacramento. The fees are \$12 for a student or senior, \$24 for a single working person, and \$36 for working couples/partners.



August 15, 1987 guests at Matagiri darshan

Photo by Julian Lines

21-2-68

The reminiscences will
be short.

I came to India to meet Sri Aurobindo.
I remained in India to live with Sri Aurobindo.
When he left his body, I continued to live here
in order to do his work which is, by serving
the Truth and enlightening mankind,
to hasten the rule of the Divine's
Love upon earth.



(The reminiscences will be short.

Z came to India to meet Sri Aurobindo. When he left his body,
I continued to live here in order to do his work which is by serving
the Truth and enlightening mankind, to hasten the rule of the
Divine's Love upon earth.)

21 February 1968