

Sonoma Ashram Foundation

Fullness *overflowing*

November-December 2009

www.sonomaashram.org info@sonomaashram.org



Dear Friends,

Finally we have established a name that reflects the true essence of our work and that unifies our service projects in the U.S. and abroad. After much thought, we have chosen "Sonoma Ashram Foundation" as our formal name.

Our tagline, *Fullness overflowing*, captures the heart of our work — *sadhana* and *seva*. *Sadhana* is spiritual practice, anything we do daily to acknowledge our wholeness, and the overflow of that wholeness is *seva*, selfless service.



Our work remains the same. In the United States, our primary service project is Sonoma Ashram, offering an oasis of stillness, a sanctuary for self-growth and retreat, as well as support for those experiencing challenges and transformations. You may have heard Babaji say that when he asked his Guru what his mission should be in this country, Aghoreshwar said, "In India, we have leprosy hospitals, clinics and schools for the poor, but restlessness is the leprosy of the West ... and it's very contagious. Go and create centers where people could come and experience stillness." Following his Guru's instructions, Babaji established Sonoma Ashram in 1990 as an offering of selfless service. For almost 20 years the Ashram has been a safe refuge for friends near and far, open to all.

In the holy city of Varanasi, India, we provide a safe home for orphaned and abandoned children (Bal Ashram), a school for street children (Anjali School), an eye clinic (Vision Varanasi), and a knowledge-sharing program (Gyan Daan). We're in the initial stages of creating a an educational Eco-Center (Amrit Sagar) and a safe haven for homeless women and abandoned babies (Project Shakti), also in Varanasi.

New Video A new DVD about Sonoma Ashram Foundation is now available. If you would like a copy, we'll be glad to mail it to you. To request your copy, please email info@sonomaashram.org or call the Ashram at 707-996-8915.

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH NEW VIDEO](#)



*This coming year
Sonoma Ashram
will celebrate
20 years
of service*

Babaji's Travels Last month Babaji traveled in the northeastern states, giving talks and programs in New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts and New Hampshire. It was moving to see so many people touched by Babaji's love and teachings. The two images to the right were taken at Yoga East Yoga in Portsmouth, NH, and the image below was taken in Guilford, CT — Babaji with Michael. Much gratitude goes to all of our hosts and the many who put so much effort into making the trip successful.

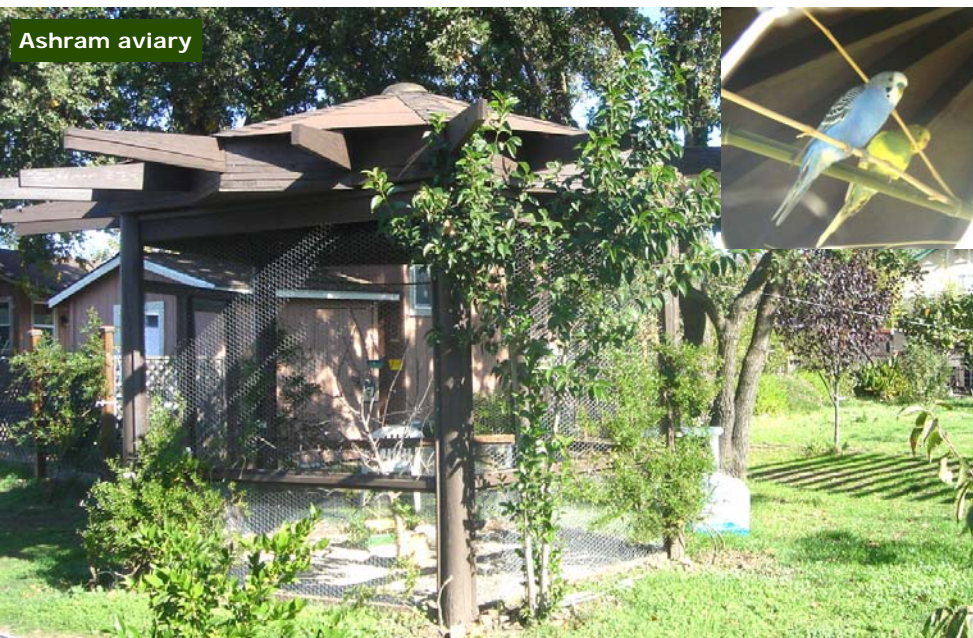


Sonoma Ashram

Sonoma, California

Beautification continues in all corners at Sonoma Ashram as we further efforts to create a more welcoming environment for people from all walks of life.

- We're in the process of designing an appropriate visitors center for the Ashram.
- We're looking into energy-efficient heating and cooling options for our retreat house.
- A new greenhouse is being put up thanks to the generosity of Rachel and Bill from St. Helena.
- New programs have been added for the winter to keep Ashram life engaging and thriving.



Ashram aviary



On December 9 Babaji will return to Varanasi, India, for a three-month stay at Bal Ashram. As the excitement builds up for Babaji's arrival, we also hear about all the things that need to be addressed.

The top priority on this winter's list is to drill a proper well for drinking water. The old well that was providing water up until now is on it's last legs. After repeated attempts to repair it, the engineers are now recommending that we dig a new well. The approximate cost of the new well is \$4,000. We are looking for a generous sponsor for this much needed item.



Babaji's agenda this winter includes the following:

- Secure additional land plots for Amrit Sagar, our educational eco-center
- Continue developing the land we already have for Amrit Sagar—including fencing and irrigation—and bring the eco-center to a point where we can start welcoming local school children for day-long outings.
- Further environmental education in the local community, especially with schools and other educational institutions.
- Formalize vocational training programs for women in need—Project Shakti.

The children at Bal Ashram are healthy, doing well in school and can't wait for Babaji's arrival. Many friends will visit Bal Ashram this winter to lend a hand with ongoing projects and experience first hand the richness of Indian culture. We look forward to a productive three months at Bal Ashram, and as always, will keep you connected with regular email updates.

As the year comes to a close, we acknowledge the active participation of our friends and well-wishers who are partners in this work. Your continued trust and encouragement keeps us inspired to bring your generosity to those who need it the most.

Babaji sends you his love and blessings.

*Namasté,
Shivani*



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