

Ananda Sangha News

Ananda Sacramento

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Building An Altar

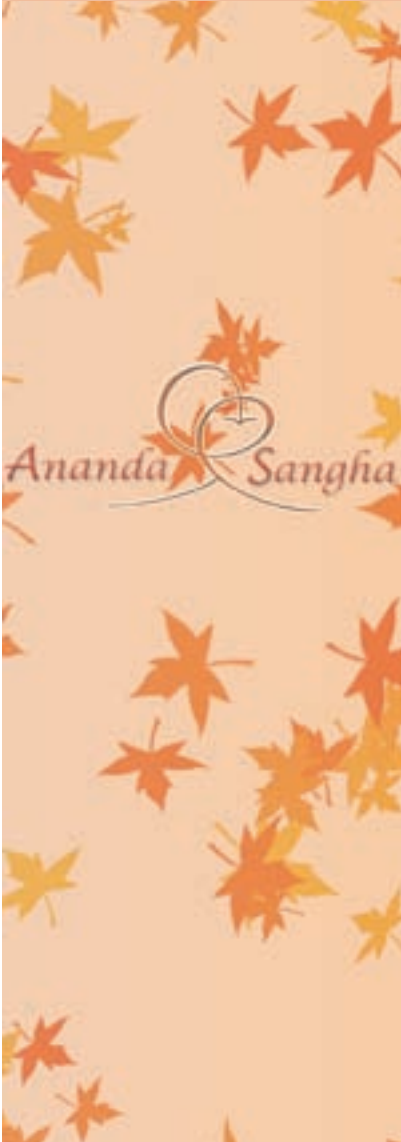
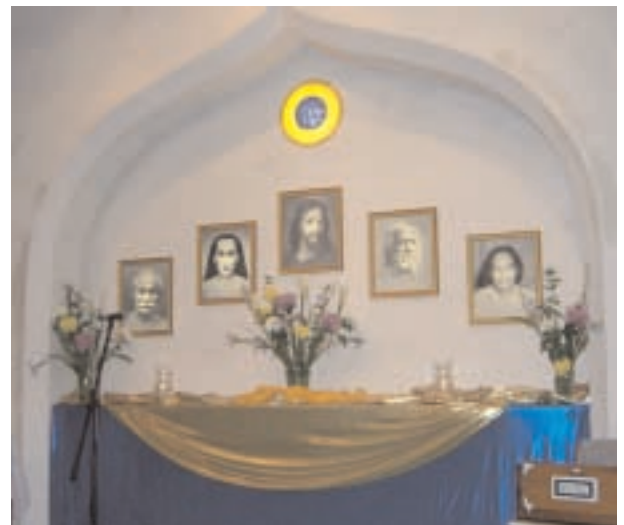
By Ananta McSweeney

We began the process of building this altar before we ever bought the building. We all thought we would beautify, make it more ours, make it more fluid, get rid of those horrid green drapes. The process engaged all of us and each of us offered what we could to that process. Some of us were thinking about color and some of us were thinking about building aspects, and some of us were thinking about financing... We were all in the Christ consciousness, each contributing our own little skills. No one person could do that.

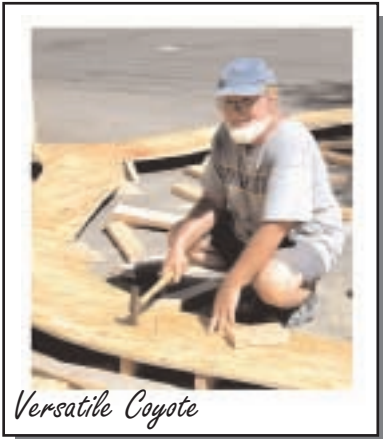
In building this altar we had 20 extremely gifted craftsmen. But there was no sense of, "I'm better than he is or she is." No sense of, "I want to do that, I'm better at that." One man who helped us was Jim Magee from Portland. When he's not building altars, do you know what he builds? Violins. Pretty cool, huh? I've never built a violin, but I imagine it would take tremendous precision. But it's that sort of thing, now we're building an altar, oh, that's nice. Now I'll build a violin and tomorrow I'll serve God. It's God flowing through you. If you tune into that flow, what you find is you have

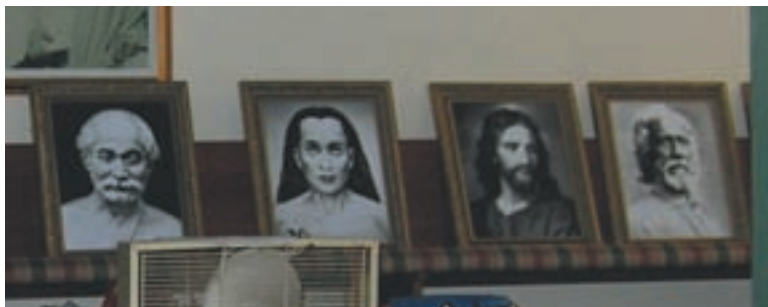
Christ's experience of joy and you see in everyone that they are all struggling with their own karma. Trying as hard as they can to touch that joy. And the moments when the joy shines through is when the desire and the ego are blanked out by the light.

Excerpts from the Sunday talk given after the altar construction.



The Ananda Sangha is a family of souls seeking Self-Realization through the scientific methods of raja yoga as taught by Paramhansa Yogananda. As divine friends, we seek to know, love and serve God in one another and in all life; we share a respect for the underlying spiritual essence of all religions. The Ananda Sangha is the heart, mind and hands for the work of Paramhansa Yogananda through Ananda with the inspiration, example and guidance of its founder, Swami Kriyananda.





Supervisors



Babaji Tim



What's back here?



Lifting the arch



Joyful Service



Tom & Aumkara, Precision Drillers

New People



Never before, in the history of the the Sacramento Colony, have we had such a large influx of new people all at the same time. If you're having a little trouble figuring out who all these newbies are, here's a little help.

Andrea & Aumkara Newhouse

Andrea is working as an administrative assistant in a real estate office in Rancho Murieta. Aumkara worked on the design team for the international space station and the space shuttle. Currently, he does independent computer work, affirmation coaching and motivational speaking. Aumkara has been on the path 19 years and Andrea 7 years. When it became necessary to relocate from Ananda Village, they looked beyond Sacramento to colonies where they have close contacts. Aumkara says, "I was surprised when this seemed to be the door that Divine Mother was opening for us and stunned by the response from both within the Community and from the greater Sacramento area. We fit."

Bea Robbins

Bea has just moved back to the United States after 33 years in the Virgin Islands. She is Terri and Arnold's Mother. She has worked in retail sales, and expects to return to this occupation once she heals from an injury to her hip. She says that at Ananda she feels safe and protected and appreciates the kindness of everyone she has met.

David Noel

David has just retired from 15 years with the state as Chief Dental Program Consultant. He was looking forward to moving to Lajolla, but the state is having a hard time letting him go. He moved to Ananda as a short-term living arrangement as he continues to work as a consultant at his former state job and discovered that he loves it here.



David Smith

David works as a security guard. He says the reason he came to Ananda was to be in an environment of positive vibration where he could meditate, do yoga and be around like-minded people who understand the needs of that kind of lifestyle.



Joan Neill

Joan Neill, pictured here with her grandson, says that she's in transition caring for her Mom 3 days a week and trying to figure out what she wants to be when she grows up. Joan first came to know Ananda through East West Bookshop. She says, "I was going through a difficult time. In the bookstore I felt at home and at peace. Ananda is a good place to move away from fear."



Joseph Overton

Joseph is a builder specializing in custom home improvements. He says he moved to Ananda because he wanted to develop his spiritual life and this is a good place to learn and study.



Lisa Bowers

Lisa, pictured here with her son Ricky, works as an optometric assistant in Roseville. She is Rick Bowers' ex-wife and moved into the community to be close to Ricky. She says of that relationship, "Rick and I live for our son and because of Ricky everything works. We don't have the conflicts that others have." Although Yogananda and Ananda are all very new to her, she is open and interested in learning. She says, "The first time I came into Ananda and experienced the friendliness and the warmth, it took me over. I look forward to meeting the people and learning more about everything. I like the good warm feeling and sincerity of everyone."



Margaux Gallinger

Margaux is the director of councilors at Weave (women escaping a violent environment). She has been on the path for 22 years. She feels Yogananda's guiding presence strongly and says that Ananda has been a consistent influence in her life.



Robert & Elaine Doctor and their children, Jonah & William

Elaine Doctor teaches martial arts to children. Her husband Robert is a musician and a stay-at-home Dad. They have two boys, Jonah, 4 on October 1 and William, 2. Elaine says that when she started coming to morning meditations and Sunday services, her heart felt at home and she knew she had to bring her family here to live. She says, "When I heard people talk about Kriya and the other teachings, I realized that I had been doing this for a long time, I just didn't know what it was called."



Robert Zeuner



Robert describes himself as an old Vermonter who moved to San Luis Obispo 6 years ago with his partner. He's a retired criminal defense lawyer and a previously ordained Methodist minister. He says, "Ananda represents the next and perhaps final step in my spiritual path."



Susan Miller

Susan commutes to San Francisco where she has worked for the Army Corp of Engineers for 36 years on environmental restoration projects. She has been on the path since 1984 and credits her son, Bobby with bringing her back to Ananda after a temporary absence. She says, "At first I found living in Community to be a haven offering me serenity in a complex life, but now I feel an expansion of what I need to deepen my spiritual life."



Building the Seattle Mandir

By Brenda Peterson

In July, after our windsurfing vacation in Oregon, Don and I headed up to Seattle to see what energy we could give to their building project. I had never spent time on a construction site before, so I couldn't wait to see what mysterious processes happened before the dream took shape. On reaching town, we drove straight to the action.

There, on a rise in Bothell, overlooking a natural forested area, stood the beautiful shell of what is soon to be a twin of the Italy mandir. We missed it at first because the blue tiles that will cover the dome had not yet come. What a natural high it was to be in the middle of the creative bustle: skilled painters and craftspeople in lively chatter, deliveries of new stuff arriving, and wide-eyed volunteers like ourselves. Willow Kushler, the awesome project coordinator, found tasks for us on the site for two days. We got to sand doors, lay paper, replace light bulbs, clean tile, and unload deliveries. We had noonday meditations and yummy lunches provided by a community member.

We got to stay in the beautiful, woodsy Ananda community located 10 minutes away in Lynnwood, where we were housed in a quiet apartment overlooking the pool. Every morning we joined meditations in the temple. Then Jacqueline Snitkin treated us to delicious breakfast spreads and conversation. We were filled with gratitude at the way our busy gurubais took care to give us tours and talk, see to our creature comforts, and share in Divine Mother's creative Spirit.



Thank You, God The Joy of Tithing

By Dave Bingham

I notice from time to time that when I feel agitated or moody I will spend money to relieve the tension. We probably all have done this from time to time. But for some of us, using this method to "feel better" has caused us to go into serious debt. This then creates more tension and we find ourselves caught in a self-sustaining world of anxiety.

How can we relax about something we have perpetually worried about? Realize with each breath that God is the doer. He is in charge. By closing our heart to the concept of giving, we need to realize that we are helping to keep ourselves in that state of anxiety about money. Giving is always associated with a feeling of joy. When we give a birthday present to someone, it is done with joy. Give back to God and live more in His joy. Then watch the anxiety begin to melt away.

One More of the New Altar

