



# YOUNG MINDS

a publication by the Young Jains of America

Fall 2008

Jai Jinendra!

We hope you enjoy reading this issue of Young Minds. Our goal is to keep the readers connected, informed, and entertained with articles across North America. As you leaf through the remaining pages of this edition, you will find a completely new make-over on the newsletter. This year's Director of Publications, Sheenika Shah, and Director of Public Relations, Vaishali Shah, have been hard at work in order to include new sections and spreads in the Young Minds newsletter, including a "Dear Atma" column.

Less than a month ago, the newly elected board flew to Phoenix for a three-day board meeting. It was a very productive "meeting of the minds," where we each brainstormed new projects and discussed both short-term and long-term plans for YJA. This year's executive board members are all very energized with ideas ranging from canned-food and used-books drives, to planning regional conferences, to getting geared up for the upcoming bidding process for the site of the next YJA convention! We look forward to initiating many of these projects this year, but we need your help to make each project a success. The best way to get involved is by contacting the regional coordinator in your region.

This current edition falls in concurrence with Diwali, also known as the "Festival of Light." Diwali is also the last day of the Hindu and Jain calendar, which follows the lunar-based year. On this day, Mahavir Bhagwan attained Nirvan (liberation) by eradicating himself from the bondage of Ghati karmas. Jains celebrate this day by fasting, going to the temple for darshan, and/or reciting bhajans and sutras. Mahavir Bhagwan's message was simple – "all living beings, irrespective of their size, shape, form, how spiritually developed or undeveloped, are equal and we should love and respect them."<sup>[1]</sup> We focused this issue on the first of Mahavir Bhagwan's five principles, the Principle of Ahimsa (Non-violence).

If you would like to contribute your writings to be included in future editions, please forward them on to [youngminds@yja.org](mailto:youngminds@yja.org). Also, if you would like to get more involved with YJA activities, contact your Regional Director – they are always looking for more youth support and input.

...And of course, you can always contact us at [chairs@yja.org](mailto:chairs@yja.org)!

Regards,

Your 2008-2009 YJA Co-Chairs,  
Sonia Ghelani and Ami Doshi

[1] Source: Lord Mahavir and His Teachings, compiled by Pravin Shah

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## **NON-VIOLENCE OF THOUGHT: CONTROLLING ANGER**

*By: Pathik Shah*

It is known that Non-violence often takes the form of thought, word, and deed. These days, however, only Non-violence of deed or action is emphasized and it undermines the equally important notions of Non-violence of thought and word. Because our thoughts often precede our words and actions, cleansing our thoughts is arguably the most important form of Ahimsa.

When we are thinking angry thoughts, we impose mental stress on our bodies. These stressors have many direct consequences for not only our health, but also the relationships we have with other people. Angry thoughts often focus on a certain event, pain, or frustration, and our preoccupation with these single facets of our life causes us to be highly irritable or even destructive in what we do. For example, I'm sure everyone has had a time where they were so frustrated or angry that they said things that they did not mean to family or friends. The brain simply stops paying attention to what goes on around us when we get angry and we act out of line as a result; even breathing normally becomes an issue. The problem comes when we don't know how to effectively deal with these intense moments constructively, but there are surefire ways to subside our angry thoughts.

The nature of our thoughts (especially angry impulses) is such that they are temporary. If you feel like you are about to get angry, try waiting about two minutes before you react. Just tell yourself that for those two minutes you will not think about the thing that made you angry. Afterwards, feel free to react and you will notice that the anger you felt two minutes ago has subsided. Open-mindedness is another solution to thought-based anger. For example, if you feel angry that a waiter is ignoring you at a restaurant, ask yourself if it is possible the waiter just has too many tables to take care of, or if he or she is having a bad day. When we try to find the good or alternative in each situation, our perspective, and therefore our attitude, can rapidly change for the better.

The biggest deterrent to anger in thought is self-control. Take time out of the day to sit in a quiet place and simply engage in self-reflection. This is a form of meditation and will give you a chance to delve deeper into who you are. Make an effort to clarify your thoughts and focus just on yourself. Repetition of this process gives us greater control of the self over time. When the realization comes that only you control your thoughts, you come that much closer to what the Jinas did – conquer their passions and attain Moksha, where there is infinite happiness. In the end it all makes sense, a life without angry thoughts is much happier. Think about it!

## JAIN PERSPECTIVES

*This section is to hear the views of other young Jains. We randomly pick five people and ask a question regarding Jainism. Hope you enjoy this section and be able to understand other people's perspectives.*

### **Question of the month: How do you practice ahimsa in your everyday life?**



Manali Shah from Chicago, IL states: "As I understand the concept of Ahimsa, it must be practiced mentally as well. Therefore, I try to make sure I do not pass judgments on others because I can never know them until I have walked in their shoes."

Vishal Shah from Chicago, IL states: "The way I practice ahimsa is by listening to a Stavan or two to get the mind in the right place and to focus on the good that I am trying to do for myself and for others. I try to avoid negative thoughts about others. I also try to avoid saying things that I would regret."



Riddhi Doshi from Chicago, IL says: "One of the ways I practice ahimsa in my day-to-day life is by being a vegetarian. Although I eat onions and potatoes on a regular basis, I avoid eating them on tithes and other religious days. In my everyday life I take care not to walk on grass and crush them if there is a sidewalk or an alternate path present. One of the last ways I practice ahimsa is by not serving non-vegetarian food. I do this by not taking up any job that would require me to touch meat, serve meat, and pay for someone's lunch or dinner if they eat meat."

Shital Shah from Chicago, IL states, "I try to follow ahimsa by acknowledging living beings in my day to day activities. This includes stepping on grass or looking down while walking to avoid stepping on any visible bugs. Keeping the idea that each and every being has a soul and feelings is a way to be respectful and practice the principle of Ahimsa in a day to day life."







Prahar Shah from Dubai states, "I left North America in May. Since then, my work has involved traveling to many new places across Europe, the Middle East, and Africa. One of the things that have really surprised me is the ability to maintain a Jain way of life no matter where I travel. From trying to communicate with non-English speaking taxi drivers in Moscow, to working with a demanding client in Ghana for over 18 hours a day, I have realized the value of practicing mental ahimsa and maintaining a Jain way of life. Working in a country of foreigners (foreign to me as I am to them) with coworkers of diverse backgrounds and life experiences, our Jain principles, and those of Ahimsa in specific, have helped me cope with the stress and pressures prevalent when working as a management consultant in emerging markets halfway around the world."

## Why Do Jains Celebrate Diwali?

By Shardule Shah

As Michael from NBC's *The Office* says, "So put on your *saris*, it's time to celebrate *Diwali*." Diwali is celebrated on the last day of the lunar month of Ashwin, during the solar calendar months of October or November. This year, Diwali falls on Tuesday, October 28<sup>th</sup>.

Indians of all religions celebrate Diwali. In many parts of India, it is the homecoming of King Rama (of Ramayana fame) of Ayodhya after a 14-year exile in the forest. The people of Ayodhya (the capital of his kingdom) welcomed Rama by lighting rows (avali) of lamps (deepa), thus its name, Deepawali, or simply shortened as Diwali. Southern India marks it as the day Lord Krishna defeated the demon Narakasura.

But specifically, why do *Jains* celebrate Diwali? Diwali is the day that Lord Mahavira attained nirvana at Pavapuri. Lord Mahavira attained nirvana at the dawn of the amavasya (new moon). According to the Kalpasutra (a pictorial description of Lord Mahavira's life and past lives) by Acharya Bhadrabahuwami, written during the 3rd century BC, many Gods were present, illuminating the darkness of the dawn.

The following night was pitch black without the light of the gods or the moon. To symbolically keep the light of Lord Mahavira's knowledge alive, kings and Gods lit lamps. They said: "Since the light of knowledge is gone, we will make light of ordinary matter."

This Diwali, take the time to reflect upon the meaning of Lord Mahavira's message of non-violence and compassion towards all living beings.



## **BE GREEN! IS IT A COLOR OR A LIFESTYLE?** *By Naman Jain*

What is the first thing that comes into your mind, when you hear the word "Green?" Yes, green is a color, but Green also means to be environmentally friendly. To be "green" as an individual means to live your life in a way that reduces the pollution we cause to our planet. We cause destruction to our Planet earth in several ways, but the most common one is due to excess of Carbon Dioxide emissions in our atmosphere. Due to an excess of CO<sub>2</sub> gases, there is a thick layer of it surrounding the earth. This thick layer is like creating a "greenhouse effect" on earth. This greenhouse effect is similar to a situation when you get inside a car that has been parked in the sun: it's usually hotter than outside because the sun's rays enter the car through the glass, but that heat cannot escape because the windows are closed. Similarly, the overall temperature of the earth is increasing. There are many negative effects that are caused due to global warming. Some of the effects that we can notice today are an increase in the number of storms such as hurricanes and tsunamis.

What can you (one person) do about it?

Individuals are a major contributor to CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Using electricity, driving, hot water, A/C, and the heater all contribute. You are probably thinking that these things are part of your lifestyle and it is very difficult to live without these amenities, but you can do simple things without giving them up.

One way to reduce the consumption of electricity and save money is by using CFL (Compact Fluorescent Light) bulbs. If you are using a 60-watt bulb in your room, you could replace it with a CFL bulb, which only consumes 13-14 watts, and usually it's the same brightness. You can reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions while driving by turning off the engine while waiting for the red light or driving the speed limit, which can also get you a better MPG. Most people have a water tank in their basement, which constantly keeps a big amount of water hot for showers, dishwasher, washing machines, and sinks. You can buy tank-less water heaters, which provide you with instant hot water for most of your daily activities.

To save on energy and money on air conditioning and heating is very simple. During summer, when you have the air conditioning on, simply increase the temperature by only 1-2 degrees higher on the thermostat than you normally have set. During winter, when you have the heat on, simply reduce 1-2 degrees on the thermostat. These 1-2 degrees amount to huge savings and energy conservation on a yearly basis.

These simple changes can significantly save you money and also conserve energy to reduce the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. It is important to know how the things you consume and use affect the world around you. We sometimes do not realize how our actions affect the earth physically. At the same time, if we treat the earth consciously and observe our actions, the earth's environment will get better, not worse.



## Dear Atma...

A column discussing prevalent youth issues



Dear Atma is a column where people can ask various questions about Jainism, education, spirituality and even personal issues. All questions that are submitted will be kept and answered in a strictly confidential manner. We would love to hear your thoughts and questions and be able to help you. Feel free to e-mail us questions at [youngminds@yja.org](mailto:youngminds@yja.org) for the next issue.

Dear Atma:

I am always really confused because every time I go to the temple my parents make me pray. Why do we pray? It would be wonderful if you can help me understand the concept behind why we do it.

Thanks,  
Confused Prayer

Dear Confused Prayer:

We pray because we are paying reverence to the 24 Tirthankaras and other great-learned figures. We want to acquire the qualities that the Tirthankaras have acquired. The qualities that led them to liberation from the cycle of birth and death include right perception, right knowledge, and right conduct (Samyag Darshan Gnyan Charitrani Moksha Margah). Hope this helped you understand why we pray.

Yours Truly,  
Atma



## SHARDULE'S CORNER

JAIN EDUCATION BY SHARDULE SHAH



Let's take it back to the basics. We all understand that the more we incorporate Jainism into our lives, the less *mental*, *verbal*, and *physical* violence we will commit.

Here is a sutra, the first one recited during Chaitya Vandan. Chaitya Vandan means 'to pay respects to the learned (such as the 24 Tirthankaras) at a dherasar' and can be performed on its own or as part of the Samayik ritual.

Recitation of the Iriya Vahiya Sutra once a day allows us to reflect upon the violence we cause while doing simple everyday activities such as walking. While the intent is not to make us feel guilty for our actions, it serves as a good reminder of the ways in which we can avoid purposeless violence.

The following text is an amended version of the Iriya Vahiya Sutra as presented in "English Pratrikramana" by Pravin K. Shah of North Carolina.

### 1.4 Forgiveness Verse of Sāmāyika - Iryā Vahiya Sutra

*It is very important that we ask for forgiveness and repent for the sins committed by us either knowingly or unknowingly before we perform Sāmāyika, Pratikraman, and Chaitya Vandan (praying to the Tirthankars at the temple) rituals. After doing so, we should perform introspection (Kāyotsarga) so as not to commit these sins again. The ritual in which we perform atonement during Sāmāyika is known as Iryāvahiya. By recitation of this sutra, a person enumerates the sins that may have been committed in ordinary day-to-day life while moving around, and repents, apologizes, and asks for forgiveness for those sins.*

#### इरियावहिया सूत्रः

इच्छा-कारेण संदिसह भगवन् ! इरियावहियं पडिक्कमामि ?

इच्छं, इच्छामि पडिक्कमिउं.....1.

इरियावहियाए, विराहणाए.....2.

गमणागमणे.....3.

पाण-क्कमणे, बीय-क्कमणे, हरिय-क्कमणे,

ओसा-उत्तिंग-पणग-दग-मट्टी-मक्कडा-संताणा-संकमणे.....4.

जे मे जीवा विराहिया.....5.

एगिंदिया, बेइंदिया, तेइंदिया, चउरिंदिया, पंचिंदिया.....6.

अभिहया, वल्लिया, लेसिया, संघाइया, संघट्टिया,

परियाविया, किलामिया, उद्धविया,

ठाणाओ ठाणं संकामिया, जीवियाओ ववरोविया,

तस्स मिच्छा मि दुक्कडं.....7.



### iriyāvahiyā sutra

icchā-kārena sandisaha bhagavan !

iriyāvahiyam padikkamāmi ?

iccham, icchāmi padikkamium .....1.

iriyāvahiyāe, virāhanāe.....2.

gamanā-gamane.....3.

pāna-kkamane, biya-kkamane, hariya-kkamane,

osā-uttinga, panaga-daga,

matti-makkadā-santānā-sankamane.....4.

je me jivā virāhiyā.....5.

egindiyā, beindiyā, teindiyā, caurindiyā, pancindiyā.....6.

abhihayā, vattiyā, lesiyā, sanghāiyā, sanghattiyā,

pariyāviyā, kilāmiyā, uddaviyā, thānāo thānam,

sankāmiyā, jiviyāo vavaroviyā,

tassa micchā mi dukkadam.....7.

While walking I may have pained or crushed living beings such as:

- Live animate seeds
- Live plants
- Living beings in the dew
- Living ant hills
- Living moss
- Living beings in the water
- Living beings in the earth
- Living webs of spiders
- I may have harassed or crushed all of these.

Whatever living beings I have pained:

- Living beings with only one sense, the sense of touch, as in plants as well as the microorganisms inhabiting the earth, water, fire, and air;
- Living beings with only two senses, the sense of touch and taste, as in worms and shell creatures;
- Living beings with three senses, the sense of touch, taste, and smell, as in ants;
- Living beings with four senses, the sense of touch, taste, smell, and sight, as in bees, wasps, and other flying insects;
- Living beings with all five senses, the sense of touch, taste, smell, sight and hearing, as in beings of the water (fish), beings of the land (mammals, other animals, and humans), and beings of the sky (birds).





Whoever may have been beaten or struck by me while traveling;

- Whoever I may have covered by dust;
- Whoever I may have been rubbed up against;
- Whoever I may have been forced to collide with;
- Whoever I may have had pain caused by my touching or tilting them; whoever may have been tormented by being turned entirely upside down;
- To whomever I may have inflicted pain;
- Whoever I may have frightened;
- Whoever I may have shifted from one place to another;
- Whoever I may have separated from life and made lifeless.

May all that be forgiven and may all the suffering I caused, knowingly or unknowingly, cease.

May the ignorance in me that caused pain in other living beings come to an end, and may they all forgive me.

In addition to reflecting upon physical violence committed towards others, this quote from Mahavir allows us to reflect upon how meaningless it is to cause violence (in any form) to others:

“Fight with yourself. Why fight with external foes? He, who conquers himself through himself, will obtain happiness.”

Take a moment to interpret that for yourself. My interpretation is that by focusing on our improving ourselves and leading simpler, more purpose-driven, and more spiritually-based lives, we can reduce the amount of pain we bring upon others.

Happy Diwali to all and I hope that this issue’s featured sutra and quote helps you to lead happier and more fulfilling days ahead!





## **AHIMSA AND VEGETARIANISM: SMALL WORDS, BIG IMPACT**

*By Suraj Krishna Devraj*

Ahimsa (non-violence/non-injury) and vegetarianism are basic practices that go hand in hand with each other. Both beliefs are the fundamental principles of a Jain. Most of us understand the reason we believe in these fundamental principles is not to cause any kind of harm to other living beings and to ultimately detach ourselves from the karmas bound by these activities. Living in a predominantly meat eating country, most of us at some time or another have been asked, “Why don’t you eat meat?” and while some of us immediately know the answer, others of us struggle to purvey our reasoning. My answer and reasoning were those that I had to search for. So allow me to delve into a story about my experience.

“...I decided I would never eat meat again.”

Most children born to Jain families grow up vegetarian; however, I was born to a non-traditional family who did not impose any specific values on me. My father was a non-practicing Hindu who consumed meat and my mother was a Jain who herself was vegetarian, but allowed me to eat meat. You might ask, if she is Jain, why did she allow me to eat meat? The answer is she believed that my religion and my spirituality should be my quest. She never forced me to be vegetarian; my mother wanted me to make that conscious decision myself. My mother knew she was doing something against her own beliefs, and in allowing me to eat meat she was risking the chance I may not choose the same lifestyle. So up until about the age of six, I consumed meat.



One summer, when I was six years old, I attended a lecture held by Gurudev Shri Chitrabhanuji at a JAINA convention in Northern California with my mother. Now my memory of most of this convention is vague; however, I clearly remember a few words, which were uttered during this lecture. I remember Gurudev saying, “All living beings have a soul like ours and have a right to live, ask yourself, is it our right to take the life of another living being?” Up until this day I had little knowledge of Jainism, other than that my mother was Jain and that humans and animals are living beings. Yet for some reason these words were astoundingly clear to me, and somehow at that moment in time, I came to the realization that the food I have been eating is causing pain to another living being. I remember at the very end of that lecture I approached my mom and told her that I decided I would never eat meat again.



Even until this day I can still see the look on my mother's face after I told her this. She had the look of amazement, happiness, and pride. I didn't realize this was such a big deal or what type of life impact it would have on me. I have a great amount of gratitude towards my mother for giving me the opportunity to make the decision and to Gurudev for enlightening me. Little do people realize what a large impact a few small words can have, even in the mind of a young person! So now when people ask me "Why don't you eat meat?" I tell them one simple thing: "I believe all living things have a right to live, so ask yourself, do you have the right to take the life of another living being?" Even the smallest decisions can have the largest impact. We should be the purveyors of change and positivity in this world.

### **LOW FAT VEGAN BROWNIES**

*Homemade recipe by our very own board member, Suraj Devraj!*

#### **Ingredients:**

1 Duncan Hines Double Fudge Brownie Mix  
¼ cup Semi-Sweet Vegan chocolate chips  
6 oz of Soy Yogurt (plain, vanilla, or coffee flavored)  
½ cup of Light Soy Milk  
½ cup of Walnuts (optional)  
8 x 8 non-stick baking pan  
PAM Baking spray  
Large Bowl and Spatula



#### **Instructions:**

Before starting, pre-heat oven to 375 degrees

- 1) Empty contents of brownie mix into large bowl.
- 2) Add 6 oz of Soy yogurt and ½ cup of Soy milk to bowl and stir with spatula.
- 3) Add ¼ semi-sweet chocolate chips (and walnuts if desired) to bowl and stir.
- 4) Spray 8 X 8 baking pan with PAM.
- 5) Once mix looks evenly stirred pour into pan and scoop out any remainder into pan with spatula. Spread evenly and then let mix set for 1 minute.
- 6) Place baking pan in middle rack of oven.

*Preparation time: 5-10 minutes*

*Bake time: 12-14 minutes at 375 degrees (test for adequate baking with fork)*

*Cool time: 2 minutes.*

Brownies will be moist, chewy, delicious and best of all vegan/vegetarian! Most of these items can be found at your local grocery store or Trader Joe's.



## Regional Updates

Want to know what's going on in your region? Here is a brief update from your regional coordinators! Keep a look out for your regional activities and participate in them! If you have any questions, feel free to contact your regional coordinators!

**WEST REGIONAL COORDINATOR: SURAJ DEVRAJ**  
**INCLUDES ALASKA; ARIZONA; CALIFORNIA; COLORADO;**  
**HAWAII; IDAHO; MONTANA; NEVADA; OREGON; UTAH;**  
**WASHINGTON; WYOMING; ALBERTA, CANADA; BRITISH**  
**COLUMBIA, CANADA; SASKATCHEWAN, CANADA.**

- I would love have a dinner up in the Bay or a Beach party in So-Cal (since the weather is always great!). More details to be announced!
- The Jain Center of Greater Phoenix is having their historic Pratishtha Mahotsav between December 20-26<sup>th</sup>. Visit [www.jcgp.org](http://www.jcgp.org) for more information!
- I also want to let all of you Western Region-ers know that a winter retreat is in the works for February. If you are interested in helping out with this event, please feel free to e-mail me at [suraj.devraj@yja.org](mailto:suraj.devraj@yja.org).



Toronto Jain Camp 2008

**MIDWEST REGIONAL COORDINATOR: KUNAL SHAH**  
**INCLUDES ILLINOIS; INDIANA; IOWA; KANSAS; MICHIGAN;**  
**MINNESOTA; MISSOURI; NEBRASKA; NORTH DAKOTA; OHIO;**  
**SOUTH DAKOTA; WISCONSIN; MANITOBA, CANADA.**

- This past summer we had the YJA convention in Chicago and we had a lot of turn out from our region.
- During Paryushana in Chicago there were a lot of youth targeted activities. This was a major improvement because it gave a youth and college aged students to go to come to temple.
- Jain Youth Forum of Chicago (JYFC) is hosting a Diwali Party (for ages 18 to 30) on November 15, 2008 at 7:30 pm. Get ready to celebrate Diwali with your closest Jain friends. Come out and enjoy a night of dinner, music, and mingling. Happy New Year and hope to see you all there! For more information such as location, cost, etc, please contact [jyfchicago@gmail.com](mailto:jyfchicago@gmail.com).



JYFC: Haunted House outing with dinner and bowling afterwards!



## Regional Updates

**NORTHEAST REGIONAL COORDINATOR: SONIA SHAH**  
**INCLUDES MAINE; MASSACHUSETTS; RHODE ISLAND;**  
**NEW HAMPSHIRE; NEW YORK (NORTH OF WESTCHESTER**  
**COUNTY, EXCLUSIVE); VERMONT; QUEBEC, ONTARIO, &**  
**TORONTO, CANADA**

- I am looking to host an apple picking outing, with warm cider, and a fun outdoorsy day, in Nov. There will also be dinner and upcoming discussions.
- Toronto Jain Camp was a fun-filled weekend in Acton, Ontario where counselors organized various sessions and games. The theme for our camp this year was The Endangered Jain? Visit us at <http://www.jaincamp.com>.
- Please contact me at [sonia.shah@yja.org](mailto:sonia.shah@yja.org) just to talk or have suggestions.



Young Jains of America Convention 2008: Chicago

**MID-ATLANTIC REGIONAL COORDINATOR: PATHIK SHAH.**  
**INCLUDES CONNECTICUT; DELAWARE; NEW JERSEY; NEW**  
**YORK (SOUTH OF WESTCHESTER COUNTY, INCLUSIVE);**  
**PENNSYLVANIA; WEST VIRGINIA; VIRGINIA; MARYLAND;**  
**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.**

- Jain Center of America Camping Trip took place Oct. 11-13 at Harmony Ridge Campgrounds in NJ, with fun games and lively discussions.
- November 15th - Senior Citizens Meeting. On
- December 5th - Jain Youth Bowling Trip for D.C. Suburb Jains.
- December 14th - General Elections. Contact [pathik.shah@yja.org](mailto:pathik.shah@yja.org) for more information!

**SOUTH REGIONAL COORDINATOR: PARAS SHAH**  
**INCLUDES ARKANSAS; LOUISIANA; NEW MEXICO;**  
**OKLAHOMA; TEXAS**

- I want to plan a retreat. Whether it is a campout, mini vacation in a hotel, or another idea. If you have any ideas for a type of activity, contact me.
- If you have a desire to get active on a regional level; whether it be planning, transmitting ideas back and forth, or serving as a local rep, shoot me an e-mail as [paras.shah@yja.org](mailto:paras.shah@yja.org)

**SOUTHEAST REGIONAL COORDINATOR: SEJAL SHAH**  
**INCLUDES ALABAMA; FLORIDA; GEORGIA; KENTUCKY;**  
**MARYLAND, MISSISSIPPI; NORTH CAROLINA; SOUTH**  
**CAROLINA; TENNESSEE; VIRGINIA; WASHINGTON, DC;**  
**WEST VIRGINIA.**

- In Florida, the Jain Society of Central Florida has monthly Pujas. The next one will be on December 7<sup>th</sup>.
- For the youth, we will be having a potluck dinner! It will either be in Nov. or Dec. depending on each Jain Center. The local reps of each center will be giving more information on the dinner.
- Also remember that each state in the region is still collecting donations to build beautiful Derasars near you!



Jain Center of America Camping Trip 2008



## PRATISHTHAS AROUND THE UNITED STATES

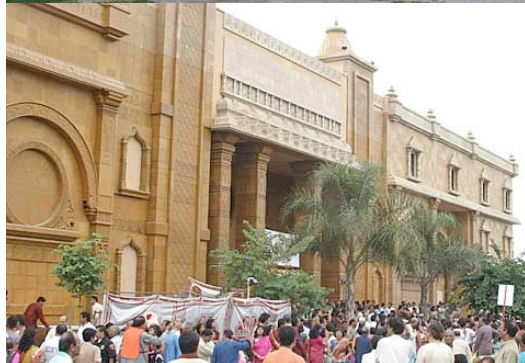
The Jain Society of Tampa Bay invites you to join in celebration of the Jain Temple Pratishtha during Thanksgiving weekend, November 27 - 30, 2008.

Tampa Bay, FL has a fun-filled long weekend planned to celebrate the occasion. Go and enjoy the different festivities if you are in the area.

Jain Society of Tampa Bay  
5513/A Lynn Rd  
Tampa, FL 33625

On October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2008 the Jain Center of Southern California had their Pratishtha of the Pratimajis. The temple has 37 Pratimajis of Tirthankars, 2 Guru Pratimajis and 8 Adhisthayak Dev-Devi Pratimajis. Lastly Aradhana Hall, a facility solely dedicated for religious and spiritual programs, was also inaugurated during these celebrations.

The temple had a very detailed 10-day program. Main highlights of the program were: Prabhatia / Usha Bhakti on all days; Dignitaries lectures on all days; Aarti & Mangal Divo followed by Bhagwan Kalyanak.; Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner; and Raas Garba & Cultural program



Temple will be 12,000+ sq. ft. on 4-acre land with white 41 ft. marble Non-violence monument and marvelous pink sand stone Toran Dwar to welcome all of you.

The Jain Society of Greater Atlanta invites you...

Swetambar Pratistha from November 14-24, 2008. On Friday November 14<sup>th</sup>, they have dinner, lighting of the Devo, opening remarks, and Parmatma Chyavan Kalyanak Part 1. The following day they have pujas followed by entertainment activities.

The Digambar Pratistha from November 20 - 23, 2008. On November 20<sup>th</sup> they have different pujas and speakers. A cultural program has been organized to celebrate everyone's hard work.

JSGA Temple  
669 S Peachtree St NW,  
Norcross, Gwinnett, GA 30071  
Phone No: 770-807-6187  
Please visit  
<http://www.jsгатemple.org/>  
for more information!

The Jain Center of Greater Phoenix invites you to attend their Pratishtha Mahotsav with 7 full days of programming.

For participation, activities and accommodations for all ages please visit  
<http://www.jcgp.org>

Jain Center of Greater Phoenix Temple  
6202 S. 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue  
Phoenix, AZ 85041





## MEET THE EXECUTIVE BOARD 2008-2009

Jai Jinendra everyone! We just wanted to introduce you to the YJA 2008-2009 Executive Board. The board members want to extend a warm welcome and introduce themselves personally. Feel free to contact us if you have any questions regarding YJA. We are here for you and to make your Jain youth experience worthwhile.



### **AMI DOSHI – CO-CHAIR**

Biography: Currently, I work and live as a technical analyst in Toronto, Canada. (Go Maple Leafs!!!) I have had the opportunity to live in three different places – Bombay, Boston and Toronto.

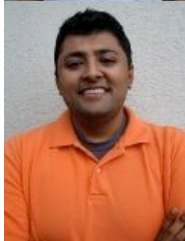
Email: [ami.doshi@yja.org](mailto:ami.doshi@yja.org)



### **SONIA GHELANI – CO-CHAIR**

Biography: I am currently a senior studying biomedical engineering at The University of Texas at Austin (Go Longhorns!). I was born and brought up in Dallas, Texas, and I am pretty much your typical, Southern gal.

Email: [sonia.ghelani@yja.org](mailto:sonia.ghelani@yja.org).



### **MITESH SHAH – DIRECTOR OF PROJECT DEVELOPMENT**

Biography: I graduated from Auburn University in December of 2004 with degrees in Management Information Systems and Finance. Currently I work as an IT consultant in Atlanta, GA.

Email: [mitesh.shah@yja.org](mailto:mitesh.shah@yja.org)



### **SHEENIKA SHAH – DIRECTOR OF PUBLICATIONS**

Biography: I was born in L.A. and raised in Orange County, so a California girl at heart! I graduated from the Univ. of San Diego in May 2008 and I am now in law school at California Western School of Law located in downtown San Diego.

Email: [sheenika.shah@yja.org](mailto:sheenika.shah@yja.org).



### **VAISHALI SHAH – DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC RELATIONS**

Biography: I am a 3rd pharmacy student at Massachusetts College of Pharmacy. I was born in Bombay. I was eight when I came to Chicago, IL and now for the past two years I have been in Boston for school.

Email: [vaishali.shah@yja.org](mailto:vaishali.shah@yja.org).



**NAMAN JAIN – DIRECTOR OF EVENTS**

Biography: I grew up in Boston and a big Red Sox fan. I recently graduated from Northeastern University with a B.S. in Computer Engineering

Email: [naman.jain@yja.org](mailto:naman.jain@yja.org)



**SUMEET BHANDARI – DIRECTOR OF IT**

Biography: I graduated from VTU with degree in Computer Science Engineering. Currently I am working as a Software Engineer for EDS.

Email: [sumeet.bhandari@yja.org](mailto:sumeet.bhandari@yja.org)



**RAJIV VAKANI – DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND FUNDRAISING**

Biography: I graduated from Baruch College with degrees in Finance & Investments and Business Journalism. I am the Director of Pension Services at Booth Financial Associates. I live on the north shore of Long Island and have been in the New York City area my whole life.

Email: [rajiv.vakani@yja.org](mailto:rajiv.vakani@yja.org)



**SHARDULE SHAH – DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION**

Biography: I grew up in Needham, MA (just outside of Boston) and went to college at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio. For the last two years, I've been working towards my PhD in Molecular Biology at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, PA.

Email: [shardule.shah@yja.org](mailto:shardule.shah@yja.org)



**SURAJ DEVRAJ – WEST REGIONAL COORDINATOR**

Biography: I'm originally from Bakersfield, CA. I went to the University of California at Irvine earning my B.A. in Sociology graduating in 2005. I am currently pursuing my Doctoral degree at USC in Physical Therapy... FIGHT ON!

Email: [suraj.devraj@yja.org](mailto:suraj.devraj@yja.org)

For more in-depth information about our board members,  
please visit [www.yja.org](http://www.yja.org)!



**KUNAL SHAH – MIDWEST REGIONAL COORDINATOR**

Biography: I am a junior at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. I am getting a degree in Finance and Supply Chain Management.

Email: [kunal.shah@yja.org](mailto:kunal.shah@yja.org)



**PARAS SHAH – SOUTH REGIONAL COORDINATOR**

Biography: I am currently a senior at Bowie High School in Austin, Texas.

Email: [paras.shah@yja.org](mailto:paras.shah@yja.org)



**SONIA SHAH – NORTHEAST REGIONAL COORDINATOR**

Biography: I am 21 years old and currently a senior at Boston University studying biomedical engineering, and have been in Boston my whole life.

Email: [sonia.shah@yja.org](mailto:sonia.shah@yja.org)



**PATHIK SHAH – MIDATLANTIC REGIONAL COORDINATOR**

Biography: I'm just a small town kid from Olney, MD with big hopes. I am a student at the University of Maryland completing an Aerospace Engineering and Project Management degree.

Email: [pathik.shah@yja.org](mailto:pathik.shah@yja.org)



**SEJAL SHAH – SOUTHEAST REGIONAL DIRECTOR**

Biography: I am a senior at the University of Georgia. GOOO DAWGS!! I am pursuing a degree in Management Information Systems. I was born and raised in Georgia.

Email: [sejal.shah@yja.org](mailto:sejal.shah@yja.org)

For more in-depth information about our board members,  
please visit [www.yja.org](http://www.yja.org)!





**Donate to YJA today and make a difference in youth lives!**

Jai Jinendra. My name is Rajiv Vakani and I am the Director of Finance & Fundraising for YJA. This year, YJA continues to be active in bringing Jainism to the forefront for all youth across the country. I would like to take this opportunity to tell you a little bit about what we are busy doing to make this a successful year.

- Regional swadhyays by YJA scholars for youth of all ages and all sanghs so that every Jain youth will have a pathshala they can attend.
- Jain information Website as well as major upgrades to the yja.org Website so youth can gather information, interact with one another and stay connected.
- Seasonal social events that are balanced with Jain activities to keep members engaged.
- Annual YJA Ski Retreat
- Local events coordinated with our Regional Directors and Representatives, which will provide a forum for Jains to interact with one another and learn Jain values.
- JAINA convention 2009 and planning for YJA convention 2010.

With the support of donors like you, YJA has grown to be the largest Jain youth organization in the world. It is an honor to be a part of something that supports and inspires countless lives. Please consider supporting our efforts with a donation today. Your contribution will provide critical support in nurturing the youth of our future. Thank you and Jai Jinendra.

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**YJA DONOR FORM**

Donor Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Company Name (Optional): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ ST: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Evening Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Check here if you wish to make this donation anonymously?

**Please make your check payable to Young Jains of America and mail it to:**

**Young Jains of America**  
Rajiv P. Vakani  
22 De Chiaro Lane  
Williston Park, NY 11596