

# Clear Light Community News

JUNE 2009 • Vol. 7

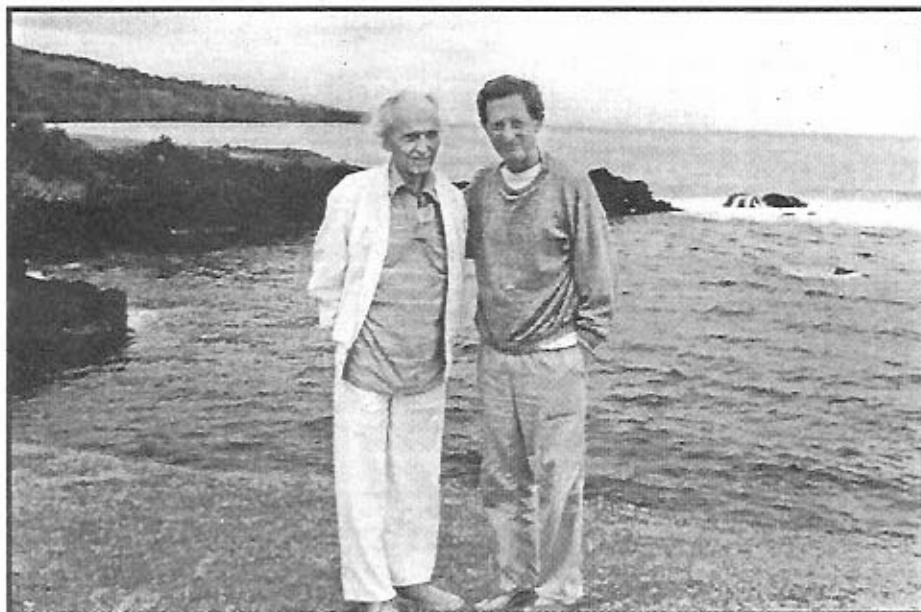
Dear Ones... Members and Friends of Golden Lotus and Song of the Morning Ranch,

*"You look after your attunement with God, and God will look after you." Daya Mata, "Only Love"*

What devotee of God has not found this to be true? The details and grand projects of life fall into harmony of their own accord when the devotee's mind is lost in God. This state of mind steals upon the devotee's consciousness the more he meditates and lives for God. The purpose of a spiritual community is to encourage the development of this kind of thinking by surrounding yourself with others who have the same interest -- *"environment is stronger than willpower,"* Sri Yukteshwar told us. Who among us has not reveled in the sweet vibration of God-contact at our SRF Sunday Services or evening meditations, bathing in the warmth of so many souls focused on God, fine-tuned to Him by surrendering their hearts to Master's chants and the words of the opening prayer?

Bob Raymer, who physically left us so recently, had a favorite song -- *"You can feel the flow, everywhere you go."* That is life in the Clear Light Community. How rich is our legacy at Song of the Morning Ranch. In his Last Will and Testament, our founder, Yogacharya Oliver left his Board only two directives, stated as follows: *"It is my deepest interest and desire that the Song of the Morning Ranch continue in existence for the purpose of furthering the teachings of Paramahansa Yogananda and the Self-Realization Fellowship of Los Angeles, California, together with the establishment of the World Brotherhood Colony as I have directed."* By the grace of God and Master, we now have our World Brotherhood Colony-- the Clear Light Community, and the two recent visits by brothers of Self-Realization Fellowship, as well as previous visits, have afforded us an opportunity to deepen our relationship with these precious souls who have devoted their whole life to God. They symbolize what we ourselves are striving to do -- *"Live God!"* as Yogacharya used to say.

You are welcome to join us here, whether as a resident or visitor, if this kind of life appeals to you. In the pages of this newsletter you will find new opportunities to do so.



Yogacharya Oliver and Bob Raymer, disciples of Master in life and in eternity, dedicated their "retirement" to carrying on His purposes at Song of The Morning Ranch. *Can not we do the same?*

The richness, variety and joy of a life lived *"in God"* awaits you. The Golden Lotus Board, the Clear Light residents, the Manager and staff of the Retreat, our local residents and distant visitors all join together with us in wishing you a heartfelt

*"WELCOME TO THE COMMUNITY!"*  
Come see us soon.

In Master's Love,

CLEAR LIGHT COMMUNITY

MANAGEMENT COMPANY, INC.

## HONORED GUESTS

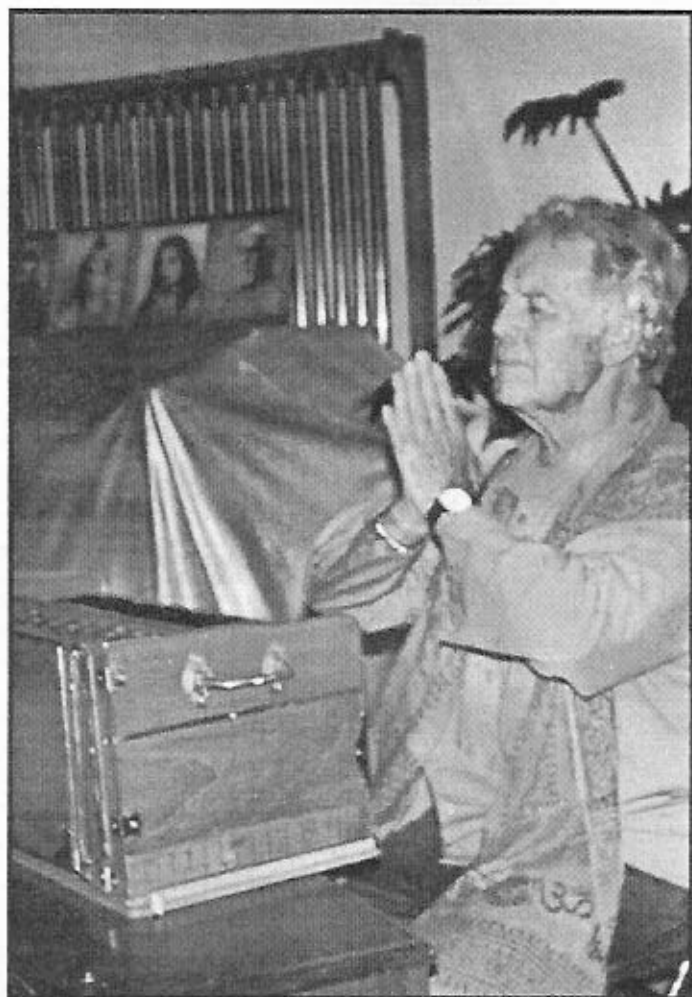
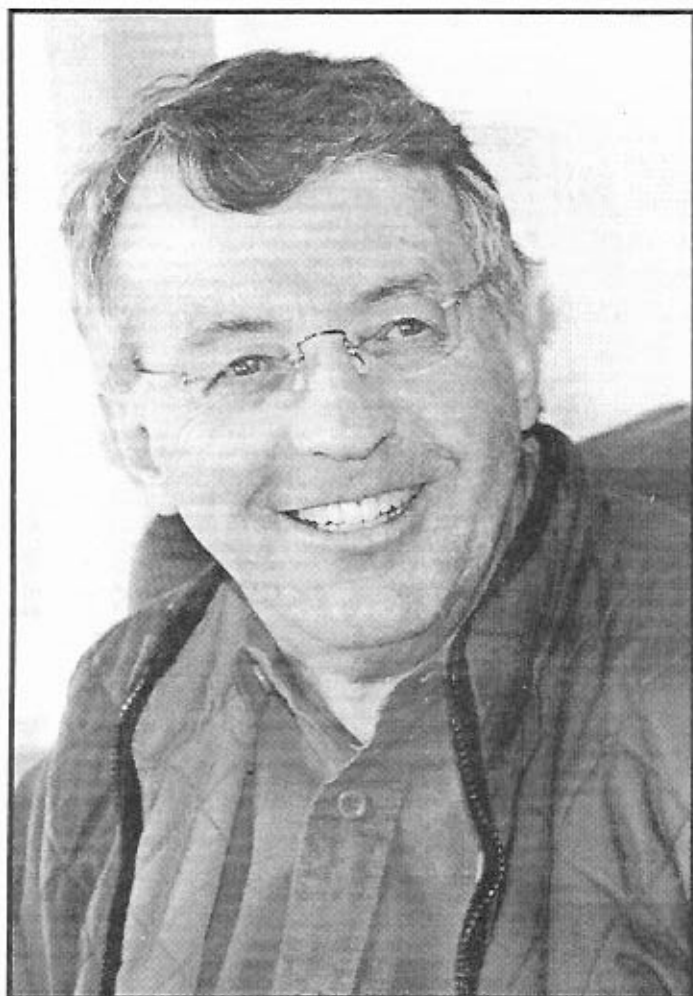


The Clear Light Community was honored twice recently to host the visits of SRF monastics to Song of the Morning Ranch. In December, Brothers Vijayananda and Naradananda came to conduct a special service in honor of Bob Raymer. On St. Patrick's Day, March 17, Brothers Santoshananda and Pranavananda came to conduct an afternoon Satsang and evening lecture.

Brother Santoshananda had met Yogacharya Oliver many years before, and had always wanted to visit his Retreat, Song of the Morning Ranch. He enjoyed the tour of the houses, buildings, and grounds, running down snowy hills to take pictures of eagles over the lake. When asked if he was disappointed in any way with what he saw, he replied with enthusiasm, "On the contrary, it is far more than I expected."



Brothers Pranavananda and Santoshananda



Each visit of the monastics to our Retreat strengthens our bond of brotherhood with those who have dedicated their entire life to the service of Master. We look forward to welcoming them again, in Master's love, whenever they can come.

# Manager's Report 2009

by Richard Armour

Due to circumstances impacting the Retreat this last year, and in deference to Yogacharya Oliver's dictum to "stay out of debt," the Clear Light Community has decided to "slow down" on some of the plans reported in our last newsletter. Instead, we are moving ahead with needed projects that are within our means. We continue to upgrade roads, especially in areas where new homes are being built and heavy trucks are delivering building materials. We have enhanced the Meditation Shrines dedicated to the Masters by building new benches for them and maintaining older ones, as well as improving the trails that lead to them. Our first community garden, located on Tranquility Trail, has been fenced in, tilled, and supplied with compost. It will have its own water well. Already 6 community members are considering trying their hand in it, working on raised beds or whatever delights them. We have a second site in mind in the Phase 3 area when houses begin to go up in that section of the community.

The lamp designed by Yogacharya Oliver which so fondly reminds us of his presence here is being reworked by resident Mike Wyman and we are looking at placing them at the entrance to each of the community roads. Besides being a beautiful sight as you drive onto the property, it will be a safety feature for residents and guests walking to and from evening meditation – not getting lost when there is a light to guide!

New Community maps are at the entrances of Phase I, II, and III. The maps will show which lots are leased, so you won't set your heart on one already taken. We have begun a children's playground next to the community garden, and are completing our phone system to all sites in the community. Add this to John and Anne Pfluecke's almost completed house, Sam and Linda Gabby's well-underway house – the first in the Phase II area – and Paul Gordon's new designs for a quadraplex living (smaller CAN be better) and a lot new is going on in the Clear Light Community.

It is a real joy living at our Retreat. As Master said, "The World Brotherhood colony idea will spread around the world like wild fire." Already, various groups have contacted us, asking advice in setting up a community of their own. Our low-interest payment plan is still open to help you lease your lot, and at our July 11 Community meeting, and Home Show, you can talk to builders about home designs. *Hope to see you there.*



Clear Light Community Garden



# ❖❖ COMMUNITY MEETING, ❖❖ HOME & GARDEN SHOW

❖❖ Saturday, July 11, 2009 ❖❖

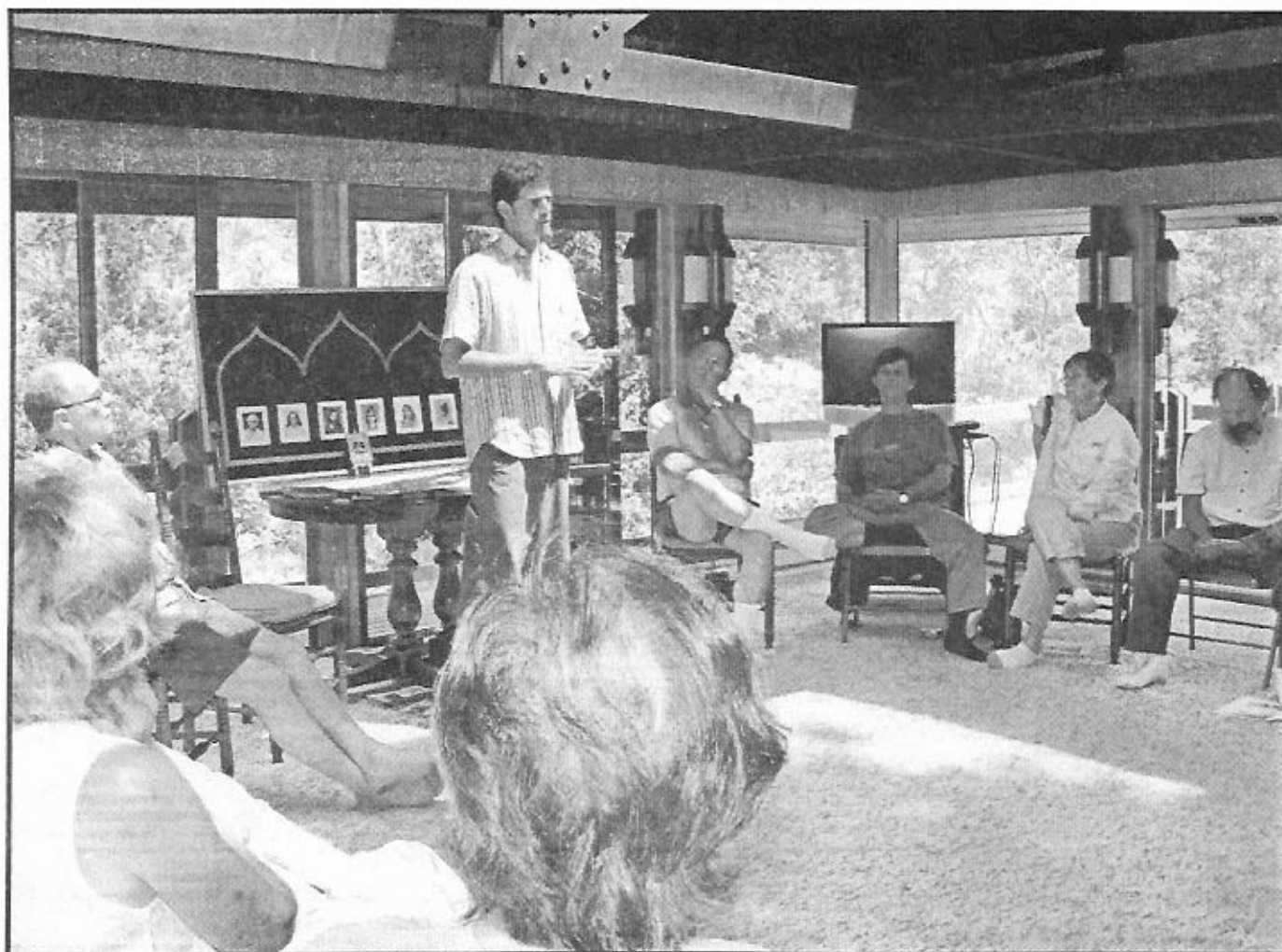
11:00 a.m

Song of the Morning Ranch

The Annual Meeting of the Clear Light Community is open to everyone, whether you plan to build a home in the community or not. Local builders will be present with home designs, and will be available for consultation. There will be representatives for everything from architecturally designed homes to modular homes and duplexes. See if you can find the home design and price range that was meant for you!

Following the meeting, we will take a community tour to the new building sites and community garden, ending at a Garden Party at the home and garden of "first residents" George and Maryann Johnston. Maryann will show you what to grow in this climate, and "forest friendly" plants (a.k.a. the deer and raccoons won't eat them.)

Bring your questions, your concerns, and anything you would like to see or can do. We are looking forward to having you there! The Community belongs to everyone!





John & Anne's home, almost finished!



Nestled in the woods on Arjuna Trail, Sam & Linda Gabby's home is rising fast!

# CLEAR LIGHT RESIDENTS

## A Yoga Retreat of Excellence

by Eileen Guilford



"A Yoga Retreat of Excellence!" How many of us were fortunate enough to hear our beloved Yogacharya say that phrase when he spoke of our retreat? Now, we have the even greater fortune to be able to purchase a lot in the Golden Lotus Clear Light Community and plan a future living there.

Having lived at the retreat, I know that there is a special secret that we all share. Whether we were fortunate enough to be there while Yogacharya was alive or Bob Raymer was taking care of all, or just feeling their presence while staying at the retreat now, there is an inner knowing that only we can comprehend. Whether it is in passing our fellow yogis on a lovely forest path, or sitting together in meditation, or eating together in the Main House and sharing dinner conversation and stories, one cannot escape that special presence while on the grounds of the Retreat or Community Property. We nod at one another to acknowledge that special essence and glow inside with fond memories, but also a clear perception of what we are striving towards.

When the eagle comes out and spreads his wings over the Pigeon River, we know in our hearts and our minds that our teachers have never left. And we are reminded why we are there. To pay homage to a higher consciousness, to build our inner and outer beings in the likeness of our dear teachers, to always remember to be the best that we can be in their memory, to make him proud of whom his children have become. These are the things that one cannot help but reflect on while on the grounds of Song of the Morning Ranch.

To be able to purchase property and plan to build a home is the icing on the cake that Yogacharya provided for us. I am now the proud owner of lot #18. As I stood on my lot a few months ago I could not help but notice the quiet loveliness of the swaying fir trees and the birds and wildlife shyly hiding in the forest. Scampering down one of the paths leading to the lake, I had to remind myself to return before dark, it was so enticing. Having been on staff years ago and knowing what a wonderful experience it was, it is with pure joy and excitement that I think about the time when I will once again be able to live with my spiritual family. I look forward to having a home where my children and grandchildren will enjoy coming for a visit or just having my fellow seekers over for conversation, or where I can keep busy by taking on a project to help build and organ-

ize our retreat.

Clearly, we will all be a part of working towards a World Brotherhood and building an inner world that our dear teachers would be proud of. I look forward to seeing all of you there!



## Always Remember, Joy, Joy, Joy!

by Mike Krumpelt



Carol Armour asked me to share with you some of my experiences with Yogacharya. I first met him in the late sixties. He was conducting the Sunday SRF service in the Detroit Art Institute. Sitting on the stage of a fairly large auditorium that could hold two to three hundred people, with a spot light shining on him, and with someone playing an SRF chant, he would lead us into meditation as the lights were being dimmed. He told us to close our eyes, sit still, relax with the spine straight and focus our attention at the mid-spot between the eye brows. He then became quiet and the whole room hushed. After a while, he would quote a passage from the Baghavad Gita or the Bible. One of his favorites that became chiseled in my mind was the passage where Krishna told Arjuna how to meditate.

*Sequestered should he sit, steadfastly meditating, solitary, his thoughts controlled, his passions laid away, quit of belongings.*

*In a fair still spot having his fixed abode- not too much raised nor yet too low let him abide his goods a cloth, a deer skin and a kusa grass.*

*There, setting hard his mind upon the One, restraining heart and senses, silent, calm, let him accomplish yoga, and achieve pureness of soul.*

*Holding immovable body, neck and head, his gaze absorbed upon his nose end, rapt from all around, Tranquil in spirit, free of fear, intent upon his brahmacharya vow, devout, musing on me, lost in the thought of Me.*

*That yogi, so devoted, so controlled comes to the peace beyond- my peace, the peace of high nirvana.*

Then he became quiet again, and one could feel his presence fill the whole room. As we were trying to calm our minds, struggling not to think and yet not being able to let go of the many preoccupations in our lives, he would sometimes say again a few words, each of us would feel in our hearts when his words were the answer



# An Experience with Master



Yogacharya Oliver told this story of one of his many experiences with Paramahansa Yogananda.

Yogacharya was in his office at work, when he felt a strange itching at the back of his neck in the region of the medulla oblongata. He kept rubbing it, but the itching would not go away. Then he heard the Inner Voice say "*Indianapolis.*" He had never been there before. Finally, the sensation was so insistent that he asked his secretary to get him a plane ticket to Indianapolis while he went home and packed a bag.

He arrived in Indianapolis still not knowing why he was there. Someone asked him if he wanted a taxi. "I guess so," he said. The taxi driver asked him where he wanted to go. He told him that he didn't know, but then asked to be taken to the best hotel in town. The driver took him to one, but said that another equally good was within walking distance.

Yogacharya went up to the desk of the first hotel and asked, "*Is Paramahansa Yogananda registered here?*" – for he could think of no better explanation for the strange occurrences except his beloved Master. "*No,*" was the reply, so he walked down to the other hotel and repeated at their desk, "*Is Paramahansa Yogananda registered here?*" "*Yes.*" He was!

Excitedly, Yogacharya went right up to His room without even calling first and knocked on the door. Master opened it, and when He saw him, let out a squeal of delight "*I knew you were coming, I knew you were coming!*" It had been Master who had drawn him in this strange way.

Yogacharya spent the entire week with Him, and when it was over, his consciousness was so elevated from the experience that he wanted to be by himself and meditate while he was waiting for his flight back home. He found an isolated spot outside of the air terminal where he could not be seen, and sat down there to meditate.

He soon became unconscious of the outer world, eventually coming to without even knowing where he was. When it came back to him, he walked back towards the airport and noticed that his feet were not touching the ground! He kept jabbing at the ground, trying to make contact, but was only able to when he reached the cement step leading back to the terminal – just in time, because he did not want to walk inside the airport in that condition.

Such were the elevating heights of inspiration brought on by this experience with Master!



Master & Disciple

# Always Remember, Joy, Joy, Joy! continued...

by Mike Krumpelt



to a preoccupation that we had. He was reading our minds and responding to our thoughts without anybody else knowing.

Before I met him, I was practicing the SRF techniques for a few years by myself. At that time, it was very lonely. Yoga was still a strange thing in the western world. You would not see young ladies sitting in the lotus posture on television, marketing some bone supplement, or news anchors talking about karma and gurus.

One would get a strange look from people with unspoken thoughts like, "*poor thing, lost his mind*" when one mentioned yoga. Still living in Germany then, I was going to a group meditation once a week. We were all beginner yogis and I was praying to Master to lead me to a true living example of his teachings. Then one day, my advisor at the university was waving some paper at me, saying he had an application form for a post-graduate position in Chicago and asked me whether I was interested. From the SRF magazine, I knew about Yogacharya and that Chicago was not too far from Detroit. So, before too long, I was on my way to the United States and soon thereafter to the service in Detroit.

Yogacharya was in his early seventies at that time. He was still full of energy, a bubble of joy, and an iron will. After the service, he would take us for lunch in the cafeteria of the Art Institute. We would sit around him as he was telling stories. One of his favorite tales was the dilemma of the young fish who wondered what water was. So together they went to see a wise fish asking him what water was. He said: It is all around you. You live in it and have your being in it. The little fish nodded and swam away, only to realize that they still did not know what water was. At that point Yogacharya would burst out laughing. He could barely contain himself and we were all infected by his joy.

In 1970 some of us went with him to the 50th anniversary convocation of Master's coming to America. Yogacharya was happily mixing with the attendees and telling everybody about the war between the animals and the birds. As the battle was raging, the animals were gaining the upper hand, when suddenly a creature came flying in, saying to the animals look: I am an animal too, I can fly but I have no feathers. The animal accepted the little thing, but the tides of war changed again and the birds were suddenly winning. There

came a little thing out of the sky saying to the birds: look I am a bird too. I don't have four legs and can fly just like you. Finally the war came to an end. A truce was declared and together the animals and birds decided to kill the bat. At that, Yogacharya would still be laughing, looking at each of us, and laugh and laugh.

At about that time, he began to convert his property at the Pigeon river into Song of the Morning Ranch. He invited us to come up and spend a weekend there. He had a care-taker couple living in the main house. They were not yogis and their cooking was awful. In time, a younger and more spiritual staff arrived. After the meals everybody would sit with Yogacharya and engage in conversation. But it was not ordinary conversations. You could never engage him into any intellectual argument about politics or even yoga. He would never allow anybody could show off their ego. He was teaching us to interiorize as we were talking with him and find the inner voice.

Sometimes he would talk about the changes that would come on earth and say that Song of the Morning Ranch would become a haven of safety where thousands would congregate.

He would also complain a little at times, that Master had relegated all the "*weary, weak and heavy laden*" disciples to him. With his gaze fixed on the distance, he would moan a little with exhaustion but still sweetly smile. Once he told me, *as you pray, don't pray to God, pray in God.*

With all his spiritual stature, Yogacharya still had to cope with personal tragedies. He lost his son, his wife died early and when his daughter passed a way, he was all alone. Two of us took him on a vacation to Sedona. While there, he developed an ear ache, and we had to take him to a doctor. As we were sitting in the car waiting for his appointment, he said let's meditate. After a while with my eyes closed I could see him standing behind me and do something on my spine. I opened my eyes and of course, he was still sitting next to me. In his last few years, he often laid down and appeared to be resting, yet he was working hard in the astral world.

One day at the Ranch, I was walking with him on the trail by the lake and as he stepped up into his house, he said: "*Always remember, joy, joy, joy.*" Those were the last words he spoke to me.

