

We will keep you posted if we can squeeze in a mini-retreat focusing exclusively on the Holy Name.

—EMAIL TO FRIENDS, DEC. 30, 2007

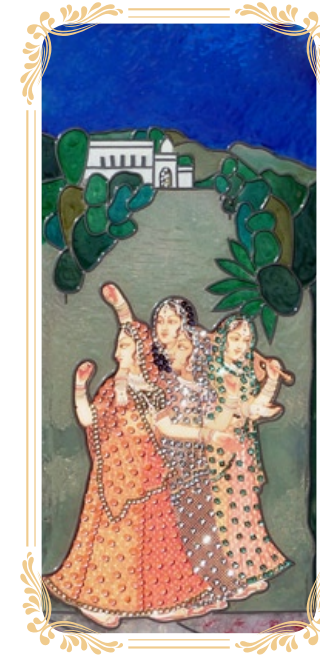
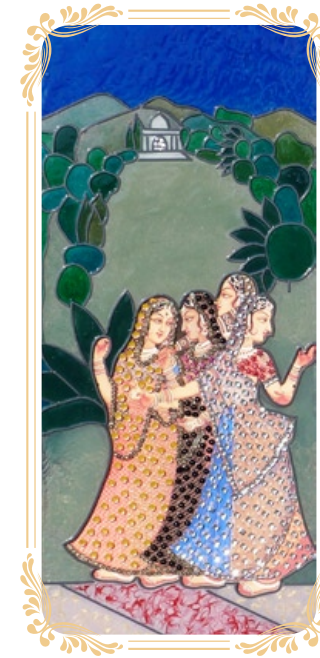
Krishna Kirtan Jaya Prema Nidhan—2008

Yamuna had envisioned a stained-glass entrance to the Deity room for many years, and in 2008 began work on her vision. Using faux stained glass paints, she designed the entrance to feature the *Trnad api sunicena* verse of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu centered at the top, with two stanzas from the *Siksastaka* prayer of Bhaktivinoda Thakur in *Gita-Vali*—*Krishna kirtan jaya prema nidhan* “chanting is a storehouse of love of God” and *Krishna kirtan jaya bhakti vilas* “chanting is the pastime of devotion”—framing each side. Although the project took many months to complete, it was extraordinary and perfectly exemplified her devotional mood.

The long winters in Saranagati left its residents housebound for much of

the time, and Yamuna utilized the time in writing her memoir and corresponding with devotees and friends via email. Frequently, a person unknown to her would write with a cooking, Deity or kirtan question, and she would unfailingly reply. Her emails were always instructive, encouraging and supportive:

Kartamasa das: Thank you so much for your association there in Saranagati. It was so brief—almost like a dream—but yet still so essential and vital to my health to see and hear and taste and feel the *bhakti* which my soul desperately craves despite all my efforts to distract myself and smother all feeling with dullness. I particularly liked the morning classes, and the *japa* on the first night. The simplicity of those activities really halted the lemming-like march of my mind. Actually Radha and I are trying to read from *Srimad-Bhagavatam* now every evening after *arati*. I hope we keep it up.



Here and opposite page: Stained glass at Banabehari Mandir made by Yamuna

