



# Gay Buddhist Fellowship

## Newsletter

A Monthly Publication of the Gay Buddhist Fellowship, San Francisco

November 1995

### GBF Calendar

24-Hour GBF Info. Line: 415/974-9878.

2 Nov., Thursday Sitting, 8 pm, at the home of Alan Oliver.

7 Nov. (Tue.), Steering Committee Meeting, 7:30 p.m. at the home of Alan Oliver.

9 Nov., Thursday Sitting, 8 pm. Location TBA. Call GBF at 415/974-9878.

10 Nov. (Fri.) Classifieds Deadline for GBF Newsletter.

12 Nov., Sunday Meeting, 10:30 a.m., 273 Page St., SF. Speaker: Patrick Bennett, a Buddhist Theravadin monk (and former Trappist monk in the Catholic Church) will share his experiences about his spiritual path as a monk and gay man.

16 Nov., Thursday Sitting, 8 pm, at the home of Mark Marion.

21 Nov. (Tue.), Buddhist Anthology Meeting. Info: David.

23 Nov., Thursday Sitting, 8 pm, at the home of Lee Robbins.

26 Nov., Sunday Meeting, 10:30 a.m., 273 Page St., SF. Discussion. ♡

30 Nov., Thursday Sitting, 8 pm. Location TBA. Call GBF at 415/974-9878.

### Letters

#### The GBF Sangha and Spiritual Practice

I'd like to share some thoughts with members about our sangha. From its inception, there has been an ongoing discussion within the Gay Buddhist Fellowship about how best to acknowledge and affirm our individual practices and at the same time how to create and support our sangha.

There are some GBF members who feel that formal teachers are essential to any real understanding of the Dharma, and others who are skeptical of teachers because of the sad history of power abuse by some in positions of authority in various traditions. Also, there are members who do not consider themselves "Buddhist" in a formal sense, but find a resonance in Buddhist thought and practice that is helpful for them. There are members who are beginners, and then others who have practiced for many years.

I feel these various attitudes and positions are important in the make-up of this organization, and that the tension created by our differences does not signify disharmony. Rather, it gives us as gay people a great opportunity to work with each other, and learn from and support one another. Even though I may disagree with others, I still am able to appreciate their spiritual practice and to care for our relationship in the Dharma. This working together and supporting each other is what it means to be a sangha, to take refuge in the sangha.

From my experience as a Buddhist monk, I feel that we members of GBF are



#### Patrick Bennett to Speak on November 12

The speaker for the November 12 Sunday meeting will be Patrick Bennett. Patrick has been a Trappist monk in the Catholic Church for many years, but recently left that tradition. He will be ordained as a Buddhist Theravadin monk in the near future. He has been doing Vipassana practice for quite some time.

Patrick will share his experiences concerning his spiritual path, both as a monk and as a gay man. We welcome him to our meeting and our community.

#### Next Potluck Nov.17

The next GBF potluck will take place on Friday, November 17, beginning at 7:00 p.m. For the second month in a row, it will be held at the home of Roger Osborne.

These social gatherings provide an opportunity to meet new friends and to get to know other GBFers better, thereby strengthening the GBF sangha. The atmosphere is relaxed, the food nourishing, and the folks friendly.

At this time GBF needs new hosts for the monthly potlucks. Please call Clint Seiter

#### Coming in December...

The December issue of the *Gay Buddhist Fellowship Newsletter* will include the second part of an introductory article on Nichiren Buddhist teachings, and an article by Alan Oliver on GBF's "Buddha and Boundaries" workshop. ♡

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## Dharma Centers

*[Each center offers ongoing programs and activities. If interested, please call them directly.]*

- **BPF** Buddhist Peace Fellowship, P.O. Box 4650, Berkeley 94704. 510/525-8596.
- **BSC** Berkeley Shambhala Center. 2288 Fulton Street, Berkeley. 510/841-6475 or 510/549-1481.
- **BZC** Berkeley Zen Center, 1933 Russell Street, Berkeley 94703. 510/845-2403.
- **CML** Community of Mindful Living, P.O. Box 7355, Albany 94707. 510/527-3751.
- **DI** Dudjon International, P.O. Box 40155, Berkeley 94704. 510/849-9928.
- **EGZC** Empty Gate Zen Center, 5707 Oakgrove Ave., Oakland 94618. 510/653-5991.
- **GGF** Green Gulch Farm (SF Zen Center): 1601 Shoreline Highway, Sausalito. 415/383-3134.
- **HSZC** Hartford Street Zen Center: 57 Hartford St., SF. 415/863-2507.
- **LMB** Land of Medicine Buddha: 5800 Prescott Road, Soquel. 408/462-8383.
- **NI** Nyingma Institute: 1815 Highland Place, Berkeley 94709. 510/843-6812.
- **ODD** Orgyen Dorje Den/Bay Area Yeshe Nyingpo: 410 Townsend #406, SF. 415/826-7181.
- **POL** POL Pema Ösel Ling: 2013 Eureka Canyon Road, Corralitos. 408/761-6266.
- **RF** Rigpa Fellowship: 816 Bancroft Way, Berkeley. 510/644-1858.
- **SBC** Saraha Buddhist Center, 3145 Geary Blvd. #515, SF. 415/731-5973.
- **SFBC** San Francisco Buddhist Center: 37 Bartlett St., SF. 415/282-2018.
- **SFSC** San Francisco Shambhala Center: 1630 Taraval St., SF. 415/731-4426.
- **SFZC** San Francisco Zen Center: 300 Page Street, SF. 415/863-3136.
- **SCZC** Santa Cruz Zen Center, 113 School Street, Santa Cruz. 408/457-0200.
- **SMZC** Sonoma Mountain Zen Center, 6367 Sonoma Mountain Road, Santa Rosa. 707/545-8105.
- **SR** Spirit Rock Meditation Center: 5000 Sir Frances Drake Blvd., Woodacre. 415/488-0170; 488-0164.
- **TCL** Tse Chen Ling Center: 4 Joost Ave, SF. 415/641-0671.
- **VI** Vajrapani Institute, P.O. Box 2130, Boulder Creek 95006. 408/338-6654.

*Do you want a dharma center's events listed here? Send info. on special events to: Local Dharma, c/o GBF, 2261 Market Street #422, San Francisco, CA 94114. ♥*

# The Local Dharma

November-December 1995

*[Note: Sometimes schedules change, so we recommend you call to confirm events.]*

## Special Events

4 Nov. (Sat.) "Compassion: The Heart of Enlightenment." A workshop on Bodhicitta, including video segments by Sogyal Rinpoche, sittings, and discussions. 9:30 am-4 pm. \$25-\$50. RF

5, 12, 19 Nov. (Sun.). "Greeting the Hard Stuff" with Eric Kolvig. Developing a mind that is ready for anything. 6:30-8:30 pm. SR

10-12 Nov. (Fri.-Sun.) "Zen Action: Bodhisattva Precepts, with Senior Dharma Teacher Tenshin Reb Anderson. Retreat exploring Zen meditation, Bodhisattva Precepts, and Right Action, with sitting, walking, teaching, and group discussions. \$150 for commuters, \$225/\$250 with accommodations. GGF

11-12 Nov. (Sat.-Sun.). "Healing Into Life," with Ian Maxwell. Teachings and practices as presented in *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying* by Sogyal Rinpoche. Major themes will include the practice of meditation, learning change and impermanence, compassion as the path, and the healing of the past. 10 am-5 pm. RF

*Ian Maxwell has been a senior student of Sogyal Rinpoche since 1977, and is a key instructor and advisor to Rigpa's International Study and Practice Program.*

17 Nov. (Fri.) "Compassion and the Art of Listening. 6:30 pm. \$10 SR

18 Nov. (Sat.) One-Day Zen Retreat in Berkeley. \$30. EGZC

9 Dec. (Sat.). "Awakening Through Service" with Guy Armstrong and James Baraz. A day of meditation practice, dharma talk, and discussion, with theme of service to community as focus for one's spiritual development. 9 am-5 pm. \$30. Code GA3. SR

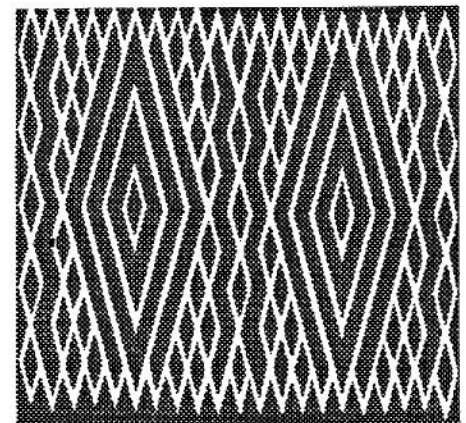
Nov.-Dec., "Positive Relationships: Improving Relationships by Working on the Mind." A series of weekly Saturday evening workshops from 7-9 pm. \$10 per class. SF Marriott Hotel. Sponsored by Saraha Buddhist Center. 415/731-5973.

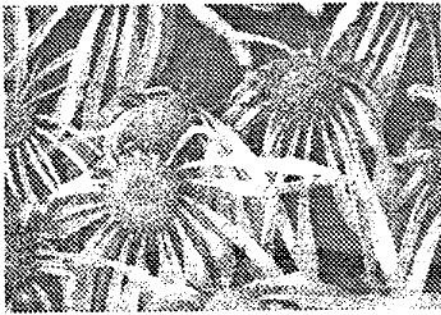
## Beyond the Bay

10-12 Nov. Weekend Retreat near San Luis Obispo led by Arnie Kotler and Therese Fitzgerald. CML

17-24 Nov. (Fri.-Fri.). Retreat near Montreal, Canada. "Healing in Life and Death," with Sogyal Rinpoche. Retreat highlights will include meditation instruction (practices of "calm abiding" and "clear seeing"); spiritual teachings on understanding death and helping the dying; and compassion as a path to enlightenment (Tonglen and Bodhicitta). The retreat will be held in a state park one hour's drive from Montreal. \$623-\$737. Info: Tana Lehr, 718/832-3360, or send e-mail to: TanaRL@aol.com.

*Sogyal Rinpoche is a teacher/master of Tibetan Buddhism. He began to teach in the West in 1974 with the founding of RIGPA. His book, *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*, is a highly acclaimed spiritual masterpiece.*





## Patrick Glennon Dies

GBF member Patrick Glennon (GenzanHokai) died peacefully of AIDS-related complications on Friday morning, August 25, 1995, at Maitri Hospice in San Francisco. He died in the same room as did a teacher whom he greatly respected and admired, Issan Dorsey Roshi.

Patrick was on the board of directors of Maitri Hospice and the Working Committee of the Buddhist AIDS Project. Earlier this year he spoke warmly and graciously at GBF about his Zen Buddhist practice and living with HIV. He sat a seven-day sesshin two weeks before he died, fully supported by his teacher, Zenshin Philip Whalen, and his practice center, the Hartford Street Zen Center.

Memorial donations in Patrick's name may be made to Maitri Hospice or Hartford Street Zen Center. ♡

## Answers to Trivia Questions and Prize Information

1. What sports did the Buddha excel in and enjoy? *He was especially good at archery, wrestling, running, and jumping.*
2. What was the "Great Renunciation?" *When he left the palace, his wife, son, and position in order to pursue a spiritual path.*
3. At what age did he formally begin his spiritual search? *He left the palace at age 29.*

At the next Sunday meeting, those with a perfect score (3 points) may have the opportunity of washing the dishes mindfully. Those with 2 points may set up and put away the cushions and chairs. Those with 1 point may set up and put away the refreshments. And those humble enough to admit to not being trivia wizards may bake or bring something for others to enjoy. ♡



## Letters

(from page 1)

committed to practice based on a willingness to accept and work with our life as we find it. The Buddha's teachings emphasize direct personal experience as a means for putting an end to delusion and suffering. Our practice is rooted in a commitment to take care of what is in front of us, to care for each other, so that our present situation becomes an active expression of religious practice. We take refuge in our potential for awakening in the Buddha's teachings, whether scriptural, or as they arise in our daily lives.

In addition to the Sunday morning meetings and the generous work being done by members at the Hamilton Family Center, I would urge GBF practitioners to take part in various workshops, sittings, and retreats to make sangha more real. I don't think it's necessary for us to have many activities, but rather to be strongly committed to the practices we have determined to be of value.

I have great confidence in GBF, in our dedication to create an open environment for gay people to practice together and support one another. I regard our commitment to work with and to care for each other a true and serious form of Buddhist practice, and feel that this activity sustains and nurtures our sangha and our spiritual lives. I am very thankful for the opportunity to have practiced with GBF members for the last four years, and look forward to future involvement with this wonderful community. Deepest thanks to you all.

Love in the Dharma,  
Daishin David Sunseri

## Classifieds Corner



### SKG BUDDHIST FRIEND/MENTOR

I want to share, learn, grow in Buddhism (meditation, yoga, vegetarianism) as only my body is imprisoned.

### GAY BUDDHIST THANKSGIVING

Experiment with a spiritually-oriented thankfulness get-together. We're seeking a few fellow experimenters who can leave old expectations of Thanksgiving behind and try something new. Reply by 11/15 to Alan Oliver.

*GBF now runs free classified ads for GBFers seeking a service or in need of some type of assistance. Ads must be typed or legibly written, double-spaced, and no more than 25 words in length.*

*The deadline for ads is the tenth of each month for the following month's newsletter. Please include your name and telephone number somewhere in your letter, so we can contact you if we have any questions. Send your ads to: Classifieds Corner, c/o GBF, 2261 Market Street #422, San Francisco, CA 94114. ♡*

## Graphics Gurus and Artsy Artists

This is addressed to those readers—you know who you are—who salivate at the thought of seeing some favorite image actually printed in the *GBF Newsletter*. Visuals contribute to the attractiveness of any publication. We welcome readers to send in any images, illustrations, patterns, or other graphics that might add a nice touch to the newsletter. Originals or copies are OK, however we cannot return them to you. Although we make no promises to print what you send us, we will keep all tasteful images on file to draw upon for use in future newsletters. ♡

