



Gay Buddhist Fellowship Newsletter

A Monthly Publication of the Gay Buddhist Fellowship, San Francisco

January 1996

GBF Calendar

Call 415/974-9878 for news about GBF and GBF-sponsored events. To skip the recording and leave a message, press 5.

4 Jan., Thursday Sitting, 8 pm, at the home of Alan Oliver.

10 Jan. (Wed.), News/Calendar/Classifieds Deadline for GBF Newsletter.

11 Jan. Thursday Sitting, 8 pm, at the home of Lee Robbins.

14 Jan., Sunday Meeting, 10:30 a.m., 273 Page St., SF. Speaker: Larry Saxxon will discuss how Buddhist practice provides a unique model for addressing issues of race and sexual orientation.

18 Jan., Thursday Sitting, 8 pm, at the home of Mark Marion.

25 Jan., Thursday Sitting, 8pm, at the home of Edward Sans.

28 Jan., Sunday Meeting, 10:30 a.m., 273 Page St., SF. Followup discussion on issues raised in Alan Oliver's article about practice, boundaries, and Buddhism. ♡



Larry Saxxon to Speak at Sunday Meeting

GBF warmly welcomes Larry Saxxon as our guest speaker at the January 14, 1996, Sunday morning meeting. Larry is a student of Suhita Dharma, a teacher in the Vietnamese Zen tradition. He is also a member of the San Francisco Buddhist Center and of GBF.

Larry will share with us his experience of practice from the perspective of an African-American gay man, and will discuss how Buddhism presents us with a unique model for addressing issues of race and sexual orientation. Please join us for this special meeting. ♡

Day of Meditation Set for February 10

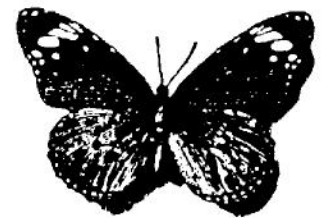
A silent, one-day sitting sponsored by GBF is planned for Saturday, February 10, 1996, at Sangha House, 1800 Arch Street, in Berkeley, from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. The schedule will include sitting and walking meditation, and some brief dharma readings. This presents a wonderful opportunity for GBF members to practice in a more structured way. Please bring a meditation cushion or bench, and a bag lunch. Tea will be provided. Space is limited.

To register, mail a check for \$10 payable to GBF to: GBF Sitting, 2261 Market Street #422, San Francisco, CA 94114. Include your name, address, and telephone number. If you have any questions about the sitting, please call Daishin David Sunseri

GBF Planning Workshop on HIV and Buddhist Practice

GBF will sponsor a one-day workshop, tentatively scheduled for April 1996, focusing on HIV disease and Buddhist practice. This workshop will give us an opportunity to share our understanding of how practice and the issues of sickness and death are related. Participants will also have an opportunity to share stories about friends and partners who have been affected by HIV.

If you are interested in helping to plan this workshop, please leave your name and telephone number on the GBF information line (415/974-9878), and we will contact you. More information about this event will appear in future newsletters. ♡



Coming up...

In future issues of this newsletter we would like to engage members of the GBF sangha in a dialogue on the meaning of sangha. If you are interested in contributing something, or if you have come across an article you would like to share with others, please let us know.

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:** Dudjom 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 Osel 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.
- **SCZC:** Santa Cruz Zen Center, 113 School Street, Santa Cruz. 408/457-0206.
- **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.
- **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. 415/488-0164.
- **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. ♡

The Local Dharma

January-February 1996

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

Special Events

8 Jan. (Mon.) "Terma: The Secret Treasure Teachings of Tibetan Buddhism." Open Secret Bookstore, San Rafael. Contact Ron Garry for time and further information.

15, 22, 29 Jan., and 12 Feb. (Mon.) "Dynamic Breaking Through: Zen and Psychotherapy" led by Raul Moncayo. This series of classes is one of a variety offered by Berkeley Zen Center. 7:30 pm. BZC

27-28 Jan. (Sat.-Sun.) "The Paradox of Love & Loss: The Seamless Path of the Heart" with Eugene Cash, Nancy Sobonya, Patrick Thornton. A non-residential weekend of traditional Buddhist teachings and modern psychological perspectives on grief and loss. Meditation, group process, inquiry, loving-kindness and equanimity practice. \$30 per day (includes lunch). Sat. 9 am-5 pm./Sun. 10 am-5 pm. Codes PT1 (1/27) & PT2 (1/28). SR

9-11 Feb. (Fri.-Sun.) "Meditation on Fear and Fearlessness" with senior dharma teacher Tenshin Reb Anderson. Through study of the five forms of fear described in the Scriptures and exploration of the dependent co-arising of anxiety, participants will have an opportunity to recognize, understand, and become free of fear and anxiety. Fri. 6 pm-Sun. 2pm. GGF

11 Feb. (Sun.) "Making Buddhist Images" with Rebecca Mayeno. This class will take place at Berkeley Zen Center. 10 am-3:30 pm. BZC

24 Feb. (Sat.) "Living the Mindful Life" with James Baratz and Charles Tart. Mindfulness in daily life activities. Includes experiential exercises, talk, and discussion. 9 am-5 pm. SR

25 Feb. (Sun.) "Translating Judaism, Translating Buddhism: A Jewish-Buddhist Retreat" with Rabbi Alan Lew and Abbot Zoketsu Fischer. A day of study and practice to magnify and freshen the understanding of both traditions. The day will focus on questions such as the relationship of mindfulness practice and prayer, and the concept of "God." 9 am-5 pm. SR

Beyond the Bay

19-21 Jan. (Fri.-Sun.) Weekend Sitting at Santa Cruz Zen Center, led by Katherine Thanas. Join the Santa Cruz Zen community for a weekend sitting. Katherine is the teacher at SCZC and has given a dharma talk at a GBF Sunday meeting. SCZC

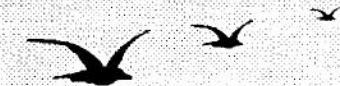
22 Mar.-8 Apr. "Buddhism: A Study in Contrasts." Travel with two Buddhist practitioners to the Kathmandu Valley, Lumbini (Buddha's birthplace), across the Himalayas into Thailand, staying in monasteries, meditating with monks and visiting with villagers to learn how religion and daily life blend. For details, contact: Myths and Mountains, (800)670-MYTH (6984).



Contributors

Thanks to the following people who helped with this issue of the GBF Newsletter: Al Chase, Alan Oliver, Bob Hass, Brian Shelley, Clint Seiter, Daishin David Sunseri, David Holmes, Greg Eichler, Jesse, John Krowka, Lee Robbins, Robin Levitt, Ron Ginsberg, and Snake.

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Buddhist AIDS Project Planning Anthology, Support Groups

The Buddhist AIDS Project (BAP) is currently compiling and editing an anthology titled, *On Meditation and AIDS: Buddhist Practice and Living With HIV*. It is scheduled to be published by Parallax Press in late 1996 or early 1997. BAP is seeking articles that connect Buddhist practice with issues of life, death, grief, life-threatening illness, and AIDS in particular. Submissions will be accepted through March, 1996.

BAP is also exploring the possibility of offering two eight-week Buddhist support groups in 1996, one for people living with HIV, and another for caregivers.

BAP is a grassroots organization that provides free information and referral to Buddhist events, resources, and AIDS services for anyone living with HIV, their families, friends, caregivers, and others. The project regularly connects Buddhist sanghas with Buddhist AIDS resources, and serves as a liaison between the Buddhist community and AIDS service organizations.

For more information on individual resources, the anthology, or the support groups, please contact BAP at 415/522-7473, or write to BAP, 555 John Muir Drive #803, San Francisco, CA 94132. ♥

Stephen Levine Featured at February 3 Workshop

"Who Dies?" is the title of a workshop to be held on Saturday, February 3, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Scottish Rite Center, 1547 Lakeside Drive, in Oakland. The featured speaker is Stephen Levine, a teacher of Vipassana meditation and the author of several best-selling books. A colleague of Elizabeth Kubler-Ross, Levine has served people in the processes of healing and dying for over 25 years.

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Hamilton Family Center Project Needs Financial Backing From GBF Members

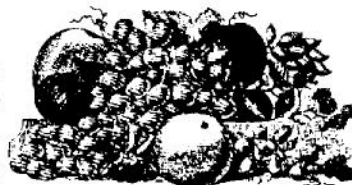
A small, dedicated group of GBFers have been serving the homeless for almost two years. In order to continue their engaged Buddhist practice, however, they urgently need monthly donations.

by Clint Seiter

A recent story in the *San Francisco Chronicle* talks about how homelessness has become the number one concern for a majority of San Francisco residents. This is not surprising. Nowadays the homeless are everywhere: sleeping in doorways, begging on street corners, camped out in parked cars. What is perhaps even more disturbing to see are the homeless families. It's hard to imagine what kind of a childhood some of these children must be living, or how their experiences on the streets will shape them as they grow older.

Almost two years ago, a small band of GBFers got together to explore what contribution we could make in helping the homeless in San Francisco. We soon learned about the Hamilton Family Center, a shelter that provides a place for homeless families to live until they can get back on their feet again. This shelter has proven to be a haven for many families, but its resources are stretched thin, and the services it can offer are limited. Typically, it can accommodate about a hundred residents, about half of whom are children.

We thought we could best help by taking on the responsibility of preparing one meal a month for the center's residents. So, every third Saturday of the month we plan a menu, buy the food, prepare the meal in the Hamilton Family Center kitchen, serve it to the residents, and clean up afterwards. As an example, our pre-Thanksgiving meal consisted of oven-baked chicken, Mexican rice (cooked in broth with vegetables and spices), mashed sweet potatoes, bread, and homemade pecan pie



with vanilla ice cream. The work involved in preparing these meals is tremendously rewarding, and a strong spirit of sangha has developed among the team members who participate.

Of course, the bottom line to all of this is that the food for these meals costs money, typically about \$120 per month. GBF has been very generous in making a monthly contribution to help defray expenses, but it can only afford to cover a small percentage of the food costs. The rest of the money comes out of the pockets of individuals involved in the project and outside donors. This has proven to be a financial strain for some of us, to the point that we may not be able to continue the project much longer. This would be a real loss, both to the members of this project, and to the residents at the shelter.

What we are looking for is a handful of individuals who would be willing to commit to a small monthly donation to help keep this project alive. Even \$5 or \$10 a month would be a tremendous help. All donations would go directly towards feeding homeless families—there are no overhead costs involved in this project.

All of us receive what often seems to be a never-ending series of appeals for money for worthwhile causes. I know this gets tiresome. If homelessness is an issue that particularly concerns you, however, then this is a concrete way you can make a difference. Please give our request your most serious consideration. For further information on how you can help, you can call me

