

# ACTIVITIES NEWSLETTER

Nov 2008

James Baraz, Teacher

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**ACTIVITY LEADERS WANTED.** If you are interested in leading an activity that the Sangha would enjoy, contact Ernie, 526-0711. It could be anything – a poetry night, folk singing, drawing/painting, outdoors, drumming – you can be creative about it.

**BAG COLLECTION.** The Mercy Brown Bag Project resumes. Bring brown bags to the Sangha on Thursdays in November and December (no plastics). Bags are used to send food to needy seniors. Look for a tub outside of the monastery or inside if it rains. Giedra, 508-2680.

**SOCKS FOR THE HOMELESS.** During December the Sangha is collecting new and gently used athletic socks for homeless men and women. Single socks ok. Look for the box by the Greeter's table. Giedra, 508-2680.

**DHARMA FRIENDS (KALYANA MITTA) GROUPS.** Generally consisting of 8-10 members, these groups usually meet every two weeks for about two hours to meditate and discuss a reading about Buddhism. They are a rich way to maintain and expand your practice and study of the dharma, and connect with like-minded spiritual friends. To join an existing group, to form your own, or to find new members for your group, contact John at 654-7477 or [jking.imcb@snugmail.com](mailto:jking.imcb@snugmail.com).

**CHAPLAINCY PROGRAM.** A Buddhist trained chaplain is available to offer spiritual support to Sangha members and their families who are experiencing a health, end-of-life, or other spiritual crisis. Contact Janet, [keyhub@sbcglobal.net](mailto:keyhub@sbcglobal.net).

**DANA TALKS.** Volunteer to give one of the weekly dana talks, share your thoughts

and feelings about generosity. Help in what to say can be provided. Sign up at the greeters table or contact Giedra, 508-2680.

1. **MONTHLY POTLUCK.** Thu, Nov 6, 6 pm at the Monastery before the sitting. To accommodate the precepts of the monks, no meat, no garlic, no onion. It is ok to come late, there is usually plenty of food.

2. **COMMUNITY PLANNING MEETING.** Sun, Nov 9, 6 pm potluck, 7-9 business. At Giedra's house, 418 Norvell, EC, 525-3328. Help plan and execute these Sangha activities. All are welcome, come and be part of the group.

3. **BIRD WALK,** Sat, Nov 22, Las Galinas Sewage Ponds. Meet at the front entrance to the North Berkeley BART station at 8:50am for a prompt 9am departure to northern San Rafael where the ponds are located. Bring binoculars, liquids, snacks; wear warm clothes. We will walk several miles on flat fire roads, return to Berkeley by 1pm. Rain cancels to Sat, Nov 29. Jeffrey, [buffalo1003@aol.com](mailto:buffalo1003@aol.com).

4. **MOVIE NIGHT.** Sat, Nov 29, 7 pm potluck dinner, 8 pm movie. The movie is "Awaken to the Eternal", a film about Nisargadatta, an enlightened being who died 20 years ago. Discussions with him are featured in the book "I Am That" (see the Teachings). The film shows him talking to with the people who came to see him, and also has interviews with people who spent time with him. At Ernie's house, 1077 Keith, 526-0711.

**UPCOMING.** Sun, Dec 14. We'll go caroling again this year at the Berkshire Senior Living Facility from 2 – 4 pm. More details TBA.

## INSIGHT MEDITATION COMMUNITY OF BERKLEY

### TEACHINGS – Self Realization

Questioner: On all sides I hear that freedom from desires and inclinations is the first condition of self-realization. But I find the condition impossible of fulfillment. Ignorance of oneself causes desires and desires perpetuate ignorance. A truly vicious circle.

Nisargatta: There are no conditions to fulfill. There is nothing to be done, nothing to be given up. Just look and remember, whatever you perceive is not you, nor yours. It is there in the field of consciousness, but you are not the field and its contents, nor even the knower of the field. It is your idea that you have to do things that entangle you in the results of your efforts – the motive, the desire, the failure to achieve, the sense of frustration – all this holds you back. Simply look at whatever happens and know that you are beyond it.

Q: Does it mean I should abstain from doing anything?

N: You cannot! What goes on must go on. If you stop suddenly you will crash.

Q: Is it a matter of the known and the knower becoming one?

N: Both are ideas in the mind, and words that express them. There is no self in them. The self is neither, between nor beyond. To look for it on the mental level is futile. Stop searching and see – it is here and now – it is that ‘I am’ you know so well. All you need to do is to cease taking yourself to be within the field of consciousness. Unless you have considered these matters carefully, listening to me once will not do. Forget your past experiences and achievements, stand naked, exposed to the winds and rains of life and you will have a chance.

From “I Am That”, the teachings of Nisargadatta Maharaj

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### EMAIL LISTS

Community Bulletin Board: For SOCIAL MESSAGES: carpools, event announcements, rentals, items to give away, help needs, services offered, etc. To subscribe, send an email to: [IMCB-BulletinBoard-subscribe@googlegroups.com](mailto:IMCB-BulletinBoard-subscribe@googlegroups.com). Address email to: [IMCB-bulletinboard@googlegroups.com](http://IMCB-bulletinboard@googlegroups.com).

Community Announcements: For ANNOUNCEMENTS. To receive dharma-related announcements from James Baraz, the community activities organizers, and the list moderator, subscribe by sending an email to: [IMCB-announcements-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:IMCB-announcements-subscribe@yahoogroups.com).

Community Website: For INFORMATION: This includes among many other things a schedule of upcoming teachers and programs. Go to: [www.insightberkeley.org](http://www.insightberkeley.org).