



April - June, 2017

Volume 7, Issue 2

Guest Teachers Schedule

April 2	Richard Shankman
April 9	Dawn Neal
April 16	Donald Rothberg
April 23	Donald Rothberg
April 30	Matthew Brensilver
May 7	Dawn Scott
May 14	Sally Armstrong
May 21	Edward Brown
May 28	Kevin Griffin
June 4	Phillip Moffitt
June 11	Wendy Palmer
June 18	Shahara Godfrey
June 25	TBA

For more information about our guest teachers go to www.marinsangha.org.

Update From the Board

Dear Sangha Members,

In last quarter's newsletter, I shared that the Board would be gathering with a facilitator for a daylong meeting. The need for a facilitator arose from the Board's desire to solidify our goals for the next three to five years, goals that came out of our All Sangha Meetings, the "dot voting," and other conversations that we've had about issues that Sangha members indicated were important to them. The main issues are:

- Marketing / Promotion / Growing the Sangha
- Fundraising
- Programs
- Diversity/Inclusion

These are big topics, and we felt that an experienced facilitator would be necessary in defining our goals and laying out a plan to implement them. In searching for a facilitator, I spoke with two women: Gina Guillemette, Director, Consulting Services, Center for Volunteer & Nonprofit Leadership, and Kim Allen, a founder of BIN (Buddhist Insight Network) who has worked with several sanghas, including Gil Fronsedale's Insight Meditation Center in Redwood City (IMC), on similar issues. We

decided on Kim Allen after the Board had a conference call with her; she seemed aligned with our aspirations for Marin Sangha, as well as being able to bring the Buddhist aspect into the discussion.

The Board met with Kim on February 4th for four hours. The first question posed was: What do we want out of today?



*Left to Right: Cory Bytof, Sara Sacksteder, Diane Fruin, Linda Howerton-Pritchett, Kim Allen (the facilitator), Art Jolly, Mary Kelly, Bob Harlow and Bill Coffin.
Photograph by Barbara McHugh*

We determined that what we wanted was to have a clear idea of the direction the Sangha needs to take to grow – whether in numbers or diversity (in age, race, and sexual orientation) or both. We started out by agreeing that we need more members so that we can afford and offer more classes, daylongs, book and sutta study groups, and opportunities for service to the Sangha (such as Circle of Caring and the Chanting Group) and to the larger community (such as cooking meals for homeless people or volunteering on Earth Day or Coastal Clean-up Day).

We also discussed the underlying reason we wanted all these programs, which is that we want Marin Sangha to be a living entity, growing beyond what Phillip started, continuing with the core tenet of living the Dharma in everyday life. We asked, why is this so important to us? This last question came down to some very personal responses from each Board member; they revolved around the values of community, wholesomeness, Dharma, diversity, differences, and moving beyond boundaries. In part, my own wishes involved having more

ease in the community, acknowledging conflicts, and finding ways to resolve them.

Kim next had us look at the Sangha as a system with guiding ideas and principles. The system has two aspects: 1. Practices and Methods (how ideas are implemented) and 2. Infrastructure (who does what? What's the setup?).

Practices and Methods, for us, means deriving our guiding principles from the Dharma, i.e., committing ourselves to wise speech, wise action (ethical behavior), and mindfulness. Infrastructure implies that there will be some hierarchy. The questions that continue to challenge us are: how does transfer from a founding teacher work? And how do we handle conflict?

The big take-away from the day was in the introduction of the **RACI** Chart, a tool for determining roles and responsibilities of teams and individuals within a given area. **RACI** stands for:

Responsible (The Doer) – completes the task or makes the decision;

Accountable (The Buck Stops Here) – individual or entity who has ultimate decision or veto power;

Consulted (In the Loop) – subject matter experts consulted prior to a final decision or action;

Informed (Keep in the Picture) – informed after decision is made, may need to take action as a result of the outcome.

As an example, we looked at how Policies, Guidelines and Procedures development at IMC is handled:

Responsible – Working group headed by a committee chair

Accountable – Its Board of Directors

Consulted – Relevant Director(s)

Informed – Other Directors, the Sangha (when relevant), relevant volunteers

Again, this is how it is done at IMC; a much larger and well-established sangha than ours. We need to explore how to use the **RACI** categories in our own way.

The Board identified several areas where we could apply this system, and we plan to do so over the coming months. These areas include Finances (budgeted and non-budgeted spending), Board Members (proposal, nomination, and approval processes), and Programs and Schedule (guest teacher selection and developing programs outside of Sunday night). In addition, we are scheduled to meet again with Kim Allen for another half-daylong on June 24th. This allows some time for the Board to work with the RACI system...and it was the first Saturday we could all (mostly) agree to meet. At that time we hope to get down to the practical matter of developing the processes needed to achieve the goal of growing Marin Sangha as a vibrant Dharma community.

If you're still reading this, I thank you for taking the time to do so. I realize it's a lengthy article with a lot of content. It condenses four hours into one article. And there's more to come!

In Service to the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha,
Linda Howerton-Pritchett, President
Marin Sangha Board of Directors

Marin Sangha 1st Quarter Financial Update

The Sangha continues to be in good shape financially. Thank you to everyone who has contributed over the past three months.

Our quarterly account statements are as follows:

Checking:

January 1 beginning balance:	\$2,511.22
March 31 ending balance:	\$2,439.10

Savings:

January 1 beginning balance:	\$7,176.79
March 31 ending balance:	\$6,685.16

Income for Sangha is typically from Sunday night Dana, plus Dana from our daylong retreats. In January, there was one daylong retreat with Donald Rothberg, which received \$1,002.

Dana for Sangha helps to pay for rent, insurance, web site hosting, and retreat offerings, as well as for small office needs and the like. Insurance this year cost \$764. Monthly rent for our Sunday evenings usually costs between \$600-\$850 per month. Rent for the daylong in January cost \$800. This quarter we also received donations of Dana from two teachers: Bill Coffin and Lisa Dale Miller, to whom we are extremely grateful.

If you ever have questions about the budget, please feel free to reach out to the Treasurer, Cory Bytof, at Sangha or by email at cmx@sonic.net.

With Deep Gratitude,

Cory Bytof, Treasurer
Marin Sangha Board of Directors

Board Meeting Dates

The dates for upcoming Board meetings through the end of the quarter are: **April 9, May 7, June 25.**

Marin Sangha News

Calming the Restless Mind Daylong, June 3rd

Below is Sally Armstrong's description of the daylong she is hosting here on June 3rd. You may register for this retreat using the Marin Sangha website. It is an all-dana retreat (that is, requiring no set fees, only donations).

“Most of us come to meditation practice with an interest in developing more peace, calm and harmony in our minds, our bodies and our lives. So we practice meditation with these intentions, but when we sit down to meditate, let’s face it – we spend a lot of time thinking. What do we think about? The heart of these movements of the mind is answering the questions, “Am I OK?,” “Was I OK?” and “Will I be OK?” We need to examine the core issues that lead us to dwell on these questions if we are to create a more skillful relationship to our thoughts. The Buddha talked about this kind of thinking, and called it unwise attention that leads to all kinds of suffering. Our obsession with these questions is also the cause of a huge amount of restlessness. Restlessness is one of the major hindrances to calming the mind and deepening our meditation, and can be seen as both the cause and the effect of all the other hindrances. The hindrances are those energies in meditation that obstruct clear seeing – desire, aversion, sleepiness, restlessness and doubt.

In this daylong we will explore simple calming meditation techniques, as well as learning to work with skillfully with whatever is a disturbance -- whether it is the different aspects of the hindrances, or the subtlest manifestations of restlessness. We need to understand these processes and find the stillness that is available in our experience here and now. Then we can truly be with things as they are, and cultivate calm, clarity and understanding in our meditation and our lives.”

Sally Armstrong

Save The Date: September 16, 2017 Coastal Cleanup Day

This is an event Marin Sangha has participated in for the last few years. It is sponsored by the California Coastal Commission. In 2016, 59,000 volunteers removed over 710,000 pounds of trash and recyclable materials from 3,260 miles of California’s coast and inland waterways. When Sangha members participate, it is usually at some nearby section of bay shoreline. There’s a party afterwards in Sausalito.

Spending those few hours taking care of the coast and inland shorelines feels good. It’s a very simple, very direct way to join with others to have a positive impact. Anyone interested in organizing this year’s effort should contact Linda Howerton-Pritchett or a Board member.

You may also wish to know more about the Coastal Commission. The COAST 4U quarterly is all about giving readers ways to connect with the coast and ocean through art, quizzes, videos, stories, and showcasing opportunities for in-person connections. For information go to coast4u@coastal.ca.gov

Linda Howerton-Pritchett

Marin Sangha Directory

The Marin Sangha Directory is now available for all members. A copy of the Directory is on the information table or available from Lucia Chaudron. If you are already in the Directory, **please check and verify that the information you provided is correct.**

If you would like to add your name to the Directory, please contact Lucia Chaudron at lmchaudron@comcast.net.

Lucia Chaudron

Marin Sangha on Facebook

If you would like to join, just log on to your Facebook account and type in Marin Sangha in the search bar. Once on the Marin Sangha Facebook page click the green “join” button. Bill Coffin or Mary Kelly will approve your request, usually within the day. There is also a link to the Facebook page on the Marin Sangha website at www.marinsangha.org.

Mary Kelly

Sangha Member Contributions

RESOLVE

- 1) Generosity
- 2) Virtue
- 3) Letting go
- 4) Wisdom
- 5) Energy
- 6) Patience
- 7) Truthfulness
- 8) **Resolve**
- 9) Kindness
- 10) Equanimity

Resolve is not something based on whimsical wishes to improve; it’s a calm, steady inner mind state that guides me in my life on a moment-by-moment basis. Resolve holds me firm in my purpose. The quality of resolve is a quiet energy that keeps me conscious and aware.

Here are some examples from my life. Years ago, I had to take an exam in a field that was almost totally

foreign to my experience. Even after I spent several months studying, the fear of failure still licked at my heels and flitted around my head. But I resolved to at least pass the examination. Taking the test, I just kept ploughing ahead, one question at a time, not allowing fear to overcome me. I remember the sense that I just needed to keep my eyes down and not look around. That sense of resolve kept me calm, enabling me to succeed.

Resolve for me is just putting one foot ahead of the next and taking care of business one day at a time. This year I have been determined to find the time and money

for a retreat, and, to my great joy, that perseverance appears to be bearing fruit.

On a less dramatic note, resolve is with me when I make the commitment to limit my time on the computer to protect my neck and shoulders from aching.

Resolve is the quality that motivates me to be patient with myself and my dear ones when I am tired and cranky.

I think resolve is different than from a good habit: it's what enables us to build the habits in the first place. After these habits -- of exercise or meditation or being on time -- become second nature, the quality of Resolve becomes available to guide us anew.

Mary Paige

Our Far-Flung Sangha

If you were around Marin Sangha any time in its first fifteen years, then you know who Brooke Brown is. If not, you missed out on knowing a dear woman, devoted mother, sangha supporter extraordinaire and deeply engaged therapist. In early 2014, Brooke's beloved daughter, Emalia, died from colorectal cancer, days after her son's third birthday. Several months later, Brooke created Na Keiki o Emalia (Emalia's Children), a bereavement program for grieving children and teens who have had a parent, sibling, 'ohana member ('ohana = close community, akin to sangha!), or close friend die. Not a therapy or counseling organization, it offers free ongoing peer support groups for these kids and their families. Modeled after the Dougy Center in Portland, Oregon, Brooke's program is the only one of its kind on Maui open to everyone.

Below is a picture of Brooke with singer Kris Kristofferson, who surprised Brooke on Valentine's Day with his offer to use his concert on February 24th to celebrate Emalia and Na Keiki o Emalia. Kris gave all the proceeds from the concert and CD sales to the foundation, a hugely generous and compassionate gift.

We celebrate Brooke with mudita (empathetic joy).

Linda Howerton-Pritchett



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Photograph by Tony Novak-Clifford

Extended Sangha

For the first half of January, Mimi and I were in Vietnam. We didn't go on retreat, but we had contact with Buddhist monks on three occasions. Each time it was spontaneous and unplanned.

The first time was on An Bang beach, near Hoi An, in the central part of coastal Vietnam. It was early morning and the sun had just risen. The sand was a golden yellow

color, and the waves were a gentle green. We sat half-looking at the waves and half-watching the young monks in gray robes playing soccer near us. When the ball from time to time bounced in our direction, a monk would run very close to us to retrieve it, make eye contact and smile, as he gained control of the ball. A small group of senior monks sat on the sand nearby, talking and also half-watching the younger ones play.

After a while, the play ended, the monks all sat down on the beach together, and we stopped noticing their activity. But suddenly two of the younger monks bounded over to where we were sitting and sat down next to us, offering a cookie as gift. "Where are you from?" The older of the two asked. His English was limited, but he was able to get across that he hoped to travel more in the future. His teacher, the master at the pagoda (monastery) where he lived, travelled frequently to China and also had been to the U.S. Since he had shown an interest in traveling with his master, this young monk was currently taking English lessons at the pagoda and had already learned a fair bit of Chinese. I speak some Chinese myself (long story, part of my training as a cultural anthropologist), and so we switched to Chinese, which was better than both his English and my Vietnamese. (I have learned that when I am in linguistically foreign lands, my Chinese can come in quite handy, and it was useful here as well.)

I was struck by how freely and easily the young monks intermingled with us, their beings with ours. Without hesitation, and without any apparent angst, they

crossed what I had assumed was a giant cultural divide between us and in an instant dissolved the “otherness” that I had believed separated us with layers upon layers of linguistic and sociocultural difference. We were quick to create a joyful rapport as a third young monk joined us. Mimi talked with the two younger monks in broken English about their love of sports, and she learned that the monks on the beach come from several pagodas, though all in the general vicinity of the beach. I shared with my new friend how much I appreciated Buddhist ideas and practice. I asked if he’d heard of Thich Nhat Hanh. He had not. I asked him about his daily practice. He wakes at around 4 a.m., sits for an hour, and works until breakfast. Then he listens to his master give a dharma talk, and subsequently works around the pagoda some more. The details of our conversation are a bit vague in my mind, but I think he told me he had been living in the pagoda since he was eight years old. At the time of our conversation, he was twenty, if I remember correctly. Mimi and I were interested in knowing how the monks came to enter the monk-hood, but we weren’t able to gain a clear understanding. Still, that didn’t deter us from trying. We were interested in the ages of our young friends (they all look so young, especially with shaven heads), and they told us. The other two were in their early teens. They wanted to know our ages too, and we told them, and a little about our children.

After talking for twenty minutes or more, their masters signaled it was time for them to leave. I will never forget how quickly and effortlessly these young monks befriended us and how spontaneous was their caring, and their open-hearted curiosity. I was struck by how easily they minimized the social and cultural walls of identity and self-protection that seem to keep people apart, in our everyday lives as well as in our travels. For me, the monks’ actions on the beach exposed those walls as shadowy illusions that solidify only if we allow them to.

Thinking about it later, I realized that as Buddhist monks, they were an extension of the Sangha that I so value at home, in the Bay Area! And it dawned on me then that the promise of sanctuary in Sangha is global. Wherever there are people with the intention to awaken, practicing acceptance of what is, and truly valuing the present moment, Sangha throws out a welcome mat. It was a revelation, and it released a wave of joyfulness and peace that infused the rest of my travels.

The second contact we had with monks was in Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon). Mimi and I decided to visit a Buddhist temple that we found on a city map, to rest and gather our energy before the long trip back to SF. But it was difficult to find, and we wandered into a smaller temple to ask for directions. A lone monk

approached and we engaged in a brief “conversation” in spite of the fact that common language was quite limited. Nevertheless, he, too, intermingled with us freely and without restraint, and with surprising trust and welcome spirit. Inexplicably, I felt embraced by the joy and heartfulness of this simple moment. And in less time than it takes to order a coffee at Starbucks, I was uplifted by the feeling that I had made a new friend. He pointed to pictures of his master and graced us with his smile. We expressed how grateful we were to have met him, and, after he pointed the way to the temple we were originally trying to find, we bowed and departed.

We found the temple, and it was worth the effort. The monks, we immediately noticed, were all eating in a separate room off the main sanctuary, which was sort of a relief for me because it meant I wouldn’t have to interact (old anxieties die hard). The clean, quiet empty space of the sanctuary was encircled with Buddha statues, and we found it so peaceful and conducive to mindfulness that we found pillows and sat down to meditate. After a while, a lone barefooted monastic appeared and approached us. “Where are you from?” she asked, with the same unassuming openness that I had by now come to identify with the monks that had reached out to us. “San Francisco,” we said, “the U.S.” Again the conversation flowed as if nothing stood between us. Language, culture and conditioning all lost their power to divide us. “Would you like to join us for something to eat?” she asked in broken English. This is when my own anxiety and sense of separateness quickly raised its “ugly head” and I reacted, “no, but thank you, we really must go.” I wish I hadn’t said that, and that we had joined them in a meal, and that my own fear had taken a back seat. It had created a little wall between us. Thankfully, I was aware of it and determined not to let it happen again, if I could prevent it.

Not soon after, the feeling hit me again that an extended Sangha exists, a global Sangha, and it is spread throughout the world. It comprises the community of people striving to be awake, to open to what is, and to accept with joy the mandate to participate in the larger inter-being of life. I am so grateful for this extended Sangha, this living sanctuary of beings, which offers much needed love and open-hearted friendliness around the world.

Tom Shaw

Reflections On The Women’s March, January 21, 2017

Leslie Carroll

I felt like I could make a difference.

The women from infants to 100 years old were there from all walks of life

The men from infants to 100 years old were there from all walks of life

And the Gay/Lesbian/Trans-genders were there from infants to 100 years old and from all walks of life
We were calm but focused on our goal, which was to have our voices heard as the majority.

Reading the individual expressions shown on the signs
Hearing the stories at Frank Ogawa Plaza
Seeing the bust of Frank Ogawa with his pink hat
Getting feedback from the Oakland police that it was the most calm demo they had witnessed (and one had a "pink" hat on towards the end I hear)

RESPECT was the goal.

Deborah Temple

So many of us were in such a state of shock and disbelief, overwhelm and even helplessness, after the November presidential elections. Emails were flying everywhere, donations were being requested and sent, group conversations took place, demonstrations were happening. But what really helped me to find a sense of hopefulness and even elation -- if for just a few hours -- were the Women's Marches taking place across our country and the world on January 21. A friend invited me to join her for the Oakland Women's March, and I gladly accepted, carpooling over with another friend to the tree-lined and peaceful neighborhood. An Uber ride away, however, was a different story.

When we arrived at the start site, the street was already buzzing, busy and crowded with signs and colors announcing protest and solidarity -- for women and our rights, for healthcare, for LGBTQI rights, for the environment. By the time we actually began walking, we had migrated from the middle of the road to being backed against a brick wall -- literally. The crowds had thickened to the point that one could barely move -- but what beautiful crowds they were! Visions of marching on Washington DC back in the sixties appeared in my mind, but this time -- so much more colorful and diversified, and without the mounted police and tear gas. It was mind- and heart-fortifying. It was an awe-inspiring kaleidoscope of our Bay area.

I was grateful to be among the people there -- from the nearly newborn and their committed parents to the frail people unable to move under their own steam. A true panoply of color, age, ethnicity, language, and orientation were all there for connection and support. There was music and dancing. I got to speak with people I might not otherwise. There was no violence, no nastiness, no police presence except further downtown, in the vicinity of the square where the speeches were given. We approached

a few police guards to ask if they had witnessed any disturbances. None.

I came away with these thoughts: I was lucky to be with the two women I was with. I was lucky to live in the Bay area, with its endless opportunities for connection, expansion, growth. I remembered my gratitude for having worked in the San Francisco public schools for twenty years. I was grateful that today I had been a part of a world-wide statement of values, hope and determination. I needed to get out of Marin more often! Blessings for everyone who had been able to be there!

Linda Howerton-Pritchett

It was an amazing day, starting with a long conversation I had with a young Asian woman on BART who was trying to correct papers for her sixth-grade Health class. We talked about budget cuts in education; the information most of the the students in her class get from her is not available to them anywhere else. She was fantastic . . . wish I'd had her -- and a Health class that discussed sex-ed -- when I was in grade school.

Arriving early for the march, we stood and talked, sometimes with each other, sometimes with strangers . . . watching the families with young children -- along with older women, supportive men, and people of every ethnicity, age and gender preference -- go by. We didn't get very far in our march, as the streets of Oakland were jammed to bursting that day. We did see a group of Native Americans doing a circle dance, and elderly people watching from their windows cheering us on. What I did not see was anyone being rude or short with another person, even though there was a lot of bumping and jostling; nor did I see any litter. I did see an extremely diverse group coming together to speak out for what is right and good -- protecting everyone's freedom to speak and live free from fear.

Sangha Member Patti Breitman Publishes New Book

I am happy to announce that my new book will be coming out in April. *Even Vegans Die: A Practical Guide to Caregiving, Acceptance, and Protecting Your Legacy of Compassion* will be published in paperback by Lantern Books (distributed by Steiner Books). My co-authors are Carol J. Adams, MDiv, and Virginia Messina, MPH, RD. A reading is scheduled for Book Passage in Corte Madera for 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, June 24th. I hope you will join me there.

Even Vegans Die is a reminder that no matter what health routine, exercise habits, or diet we follow, we are all of the nature to get old, to get sick, and to die. The book focuses on how to care for one another and ourselves when we do get ill, and how to avoid disease

shaming, fat shaming, and even care shaming among vegans and others. (Care shaming is the societal custom of dishonoring and undervaluing the role of care giver, which includes the tendency to judge people who care deeply for all beings for being sentimental.) The book also looks at the myth of independence and explores how we are all dependent on one another throughout our lives.

Additionally, this book talks about the misleading promises about guaranteed good health that are used to try to attract people to a vegan diet. While compassion for all living beings is at the heart of a vegan ethic, it can be counter productive to promise the diet as a panacea.

Finally, *Even Vegans Die* offers practical advice on why and how to create a will or trust, set up an advance health care directive, and appoint someone with the power of durable power of attorney for health care. These practical steps to take care of those who will survive us and to make our wishes known also help us to acknowledge our mortality.

The following endorsement just came in from someone whose not-for-profit is among my favorites and most respected: “Why is a title as obviously true as *Even Vegans Die* so provocative? This much-needed book from some of the vegan movement’s most compelling thinkers not only provides insights into this question, it also offers a wide range of practical advice on how to better care for ourselves and our community -- and why it’s critically important to do so. Eschewing perfectionism, denial, and blame, the authors present a care-centered lifestyle and model of effective activism based on discerning realism and profound inclusivity. They encourage these qualities for their inherent value, and also as a means to empower and embolden people of conscience to create more deliberate lives and more enduring legacies.” by Dawn Moncrief, Founding Director of A Well-Fed World.

As soon as it is published, *Even Vegans Die* will be available at the bookstore at Spirit Rock, Book Passage in Corte Madera, Fairfax Variety in Fairfax, and at on-line booksellers.

Patti Breitman

CALLING ALL GENEROUS INDIVIDUALS WHO WISH TO FIND A WAY TO BE A PART OF THE SANGHA !

The CIRCLE of CARING would like you to join. Here are some of the ways that you can contribute:

- 1) Visiting or dropping off meals to Sangha members temporarily homebound after a surgery or illness.
- 2) Offering rides to Sunday Sangha to members unable to drive themselves.
- 3) Calling ill Sangha members if you know they need to hear a friendly voice.

The CIRCLE of CARING does not involve long-term commitments, just simple acts of kindness when one of us is in need. If you would like to be included, please call Mary Paige at 415-559-8668 or email her at drmarypaige@gmail.com.

Mary Paige

Member Profile

Many thanks to Nick Rozsa as interviewed by Alice Lucas.

How did you get interested in Buddhism?

Five years ago I had just retired. Now, what do I do? An article in the Chronicle about the Zen Center in San Francisco caught my eye. I felt a personal connection because a boyhood acquaintance my age, in Minneapolis, low and behold, had become abbot at the Zen Center. This caught me by surprise because in high school, we traveled in different circles. In the vernacular, I was a “brain” and he was a “jock.” In high school he had been a weight lifter, who’d built up a (to my eyes) huge physique; he also was a star tackle and shot putter. His transformation into a Zen Buddhist was a marvelous awakening to impermanence. So much for my beliefs and expectations.

I began going to Sunday meditations at Green Gulch Zen Center and talked with Reb Anderson. I loved Green Gulch but resisted the idea of “commuting” to meditation practice regularly, which left my back hurting.

How did you happen to begin coming to Marin Sangha?

In my early Buddhist wanderings, I heard several times that there was a sangha that met in San Rafael. I went online and was pleasantly surprised to learn that a sangha, founded by Phillip Moffitt, met at St. Luke’s Church, which is a long walk from my house.

When did you begin attending?

I first attended during summer 2013 and found people welcoming and helpful, and the dharma talks relevant and informative. I’ve been attending almost every week since.

What would you like other sangha members to know about you?

I grew up in a middle class neighborhood in Minneapolis, city of lakes -- very colorful springs, summers, and falls and frozen white in winter. My parents were hard-working and disciplined. My father grew up in Hungary and got a mechanical engineering degree, but times were very tough there in 1928, and he came to the University of Kansas on scholarship in a one-of-a-kind graduate program in milling technology. He could only remain in this country by becoming engaged to my mother, whom he met at school, and then leaving the country and returning after his professors wrote to the secretary of state, Cordell Hull, certifying that he had unique experience and skills in milling grains, a vital

industry to the U.S. at that time (the Depression). Does this sound vaguely familiar, today? His proudest achievements were several patents for milling machinery. My mother was very proud of being hired as a Latin teacher to support her two younger sisters through college. She won the job despite the social pressures, during the Depression, to hire only men.

Why am I telling you all this? I grew up proud and grateful for my parents and the opportunities that came my way. We attended Episcopal Church services regularly; the sense of community was palpable when we sang the hymns together.

When I graduated from college, I served three years in the Navy as an officer on a guided missile destroyer, completing two six-month cruises off the coast of Viet Nam. Upon discharge, I walked off the ship in San Francisco, because the ship had pulled into dry dock here. I've lived here since. An early job I really enjoyed was working as an aide at a psychiatric hospital in a program for teenagers teaching them transactional analysis and helping them to discuss with peers their difficulties.

I married my wife, Anne, thirty-five years ago. We bonded while singing together in a Renaissance singing group. We lived in Sausalito on a houseboat, which was built by her uncle to look like a medieval castle with lovely changing views. We had a son born with heart defects requiring immediate surgery. I was so impressed with the nurses who showed us how to care for him that I decided to become a nurse. After getting my nursing degree, I became a certified rehabilitation nurse, which was very heart wrenching but also very meaningful. Our patients needed intensive coordinated care requiring physical, occupational, and speech/cognitive therapies after suffering disabling strokes, traumatic brain injury, spinal cord injuries, or nervous system diseases.

Our son died at age five, after heart complications, but he was a joy to live with and we knew from birth his life could be short.

We decided to adopt an African-American newborn child, Katie. She turned out to be very smart; her maternal grandmother had been an MD in Cuba. She danced ballet and performed from age seven through high school. After her junior year, she enrolled in a summer college-level Arabic class in Southern California. She just graduated from Swarthmore College and is working in Portland, Oregon, training for a bank management position.

Do you have interests that you would like to share with other Sangha members

I retired five years ago from nursing and three months later my back pain began. It's been chronic since. So I had motivation to learn both yoga and chi-gong, and they both have helped me to discover my own better ways of carrying myself with less aggravation. I take classes

weekly in each, and practice frequently. I've slowly learned to listen to my body more, and think, analyze, and fix less, in my daily movement. Speaking of movement, I enjoy walking and walk in my neighborhood several times per day, which helps my back after sitting. And I square dance every Wednesday with a square dance club. It's not grandfather's square dancing. Our caller plays mostly music that has been very popular and dance-able during my lifetime. It's great practice with mind, heart, and body, working together with mindfulness.

I meet weekly with a discussion group called Senior Circle and assist as a facilitator. We use the principles and guidelines of Attitudinal Healing, which was developed by a Marin psychiatrist based on the major spiritual teachings of the world. We all are able to talk about our struggles and successes as our lives change. It's a continuing challenge to listen to each person with joy, compassion, and acceptance, and allow each to come to his or her own best answers through the process of sharing.

What are the things that you value and appreciate about Marin Sangha?

I really like that we have a variety of teachers with different perspectives. I get a sense of adventure, coming each week, with the number of surprises and depth of the teachings that I can understand and appreciate. The daylongs are wonderful, and I am looking forward to the one on April 1 with Phillip Moffitt. I enjoy meditating with Sangha members and the support the Sangha provides as we explore different topics of the Dharma. I am impressed with the accountability and transparency of the board of directors. They do so much to keep the Sangha going. And I like feeling useful, helping with closing, and much appreciate all the folks who pitch in to help week in and week out.

How would you like Marin Sangha to grow?

I would like it to continue to be welcoming to newcomers and especially younger meditators.

Do you have anything else you'd like to say?

To the newsletter's readers: If you're interested in hearing anything more about what you have read here or would like to share from your own experience, please feel free to contact me at nkrozsa74@gmail.com.

Anyone may submit a profile or ask any questions about this project by calling Mary Paige, at 415-771-8767, or email her at: drmarypaige@gmail.com

Ongoing Activities

New Members

If you are new to Marin Sangha, welcome! More information about Marin Sangha can be found at our website www.marinsangha.org. You are also welcome to join the Marin Sangha Yahoo Group or go to our FaceBook page as other ways to find out more about our Sangha. We look forward to seeing you again.

Sunday Setup and Closing

Each Sunday three people are needed to set up the room prior to Sangha, and as many as are available are needed for restoring the room after Sangha. Please join us - a little Sangha serving the big Sangha! Nick Rozsa, at nkrozsa74@gmail.com, is available to help. You can meet him at Sangha or by emailing him at the above link.

Sunday Dinner

A group of members continue to enjoy each other's company after Sangha by having dinner together at a local restaurant. Want to join us? Contact Bill Coffin after Sangha.

Third Sunday Social Gathering

Celebrate Sangha! Come early for Third Sunday Social at 5:00 PM. Bring snack food and something to drink if you wish. Reminders will be sent out ahead of time. Dates are: **April 16, May 21, June 18.**

Sangha Website

Don't forget the Marin Sangha website at marinsangha.org. There you will find the schedule for upcoming guest teachers, the current copy of the newsletter, additional news, and, above all, the recorded dharma talks for each Sunday's meeting. There is also information on joining our Yahoo group, Facebook page, and email list. Thanks to Bill Coffin, our webmaster, for putting it together and maintaining it. Check it out!

Marin Sangha Board of Directors

Linda Howerton-Prichett:	President
Cory Bytof:	Treasurer
Bill Coffin (non-voting):	Secretary
Dianne Fruin	
Bob Harlow	
Art Jolly	
Mary Kelly	
Barbara McHugh	
Sara Sacksteder	

Marin Sangha Committees & Groups

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Marin Sangha Newsletter

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