



April - June, 2018

Volume 8, Issue 2

Guest Teachers Schedule

4/1	Donald Rothberg	
4/8	Kevin Griffin	
4/15	Oren J. Sofer	3rd Sunday
4/22	Oren J. Sofer	
4/29	Lisa Dale Miller	
5/6	Lisa Dale Miller	
5/13	TBA	
5/20	Art Jolly	3rd Sunday
5/27	Dawn Neal	
6/3	Richard Shankman	
6/10	Phillip Moffitt	
6/17	TBA	3rd Sunday
6/24	Donald Rothberg	

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

Update from the Board

Dear Sangha Members,

How are we already into April? I feel like I'm still dusting the (virtual) snow off my shoulders, still deep in winter's drowsiness...

It was over a year ago that the Board met with facilitator Kim Allen. We wanted to have a clear idea of the direction the sangha needs to take to grow – be that growth in numbers; diversity in age, race, sexual orientation, or other areas.

Why? We wanted to have more members, more money.

Why? So that Marin Sangha could offer more classes, daylongs, book and sutta study groups and opportunities for service to the sangha (such as Circle of Caring, Chanting Group) and to the larger community (such as meals for homeless, Earth Day, Coastal Clean-up Day).

Why? 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.

I must admit we have not made much progress in the growth area...many ideas have been proposed, such as:

- ◆ Erecting a sign at the turn onto Bayview Drive (bottom of the hill), announcing Marin Sangha as a Buddhist Meditation Community, and the day and time we meet
- ◆ Listing our sangha in the back of such periodicals as Yoga Journal, Tricycle and Lion's Roar
- ◆ Creating a Marin Sangha logo design and a consistent font, to be used in all "advertising": flyers, signs, etc.
- ◆ Posting a flyer about MS on bulletin boards at Andy's Market, Whole Foods, Pickleweed, Marin JCC
- ◆ Asking Oren how he thinks we might attract a younger demographic
- ◆ Outreach to local therapists – possible placement of information about our sangha with them
- ◆ Outreach through the Unitarian Church
- ◆ Outreach to students at Dominican University and College of Marin

There are probably many more ways we could reach out to the community – do YOU have any ideas? If so, please contact me, or any Board member, with your thoughts.

When we first inherited the running of Marin Sangha from Phillip and his staff, I thought our biggest problem was going to be money – how would we pay the rent and other expenses of running the sangha? Thanks to the generosity of our members, the sangha has managed quite well financially. Where we seem to have stagnated, if not in truth declined, is in our membership – the core members attending sangha on a regular basis. As we are all subject to the truths of old age, sickness and death, we must realize that for our sangha to flourish, to be a vital Buddhist community, we need new members, new energy, new ideas. In the past, these new members often came from the people Phillip attracted to the sangha with his daylongs and other retreats. As Phillip has not been a regular attraction in the past several years, this source of new members has dwindled.

It often feels that projects (daylongs, community efforts, sangha events) and regular duties (setup, closing, newsletter) are being done by the same dedicated

members, and for anything new that we would like to do, the question is always “Who will lead that effort?” This came quite clear to me with the opening up of elections for the Board of Directors: although all sangha members were encouraged to apply, and invited to attend our Board Meetings, no one was interested/able to make the commitment. We lost two of our directors, Sara Sacksteder and Bob Harlow, at the beginning of this year, and are now at seven directors. Most of the current directors have served since the Board was created in 2014, and many spent several years on the informal guiding committee prior to that. At some point, other directors will most likely wish to retire.

As part of my New Year’s resolution this year, I have been asking myself at different times “What is my priority?” This question helps me clarify when I have conflicting demands on my limited resources, whether that be time, energy or money. I am inviting you all to ask that question of yourselves, and if Marin Sangha is a priority for you, then ask what it is that you can contribute to help our sangha flourish in this twentieth anniversary year, and beyond.

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

Marin Sangha 1st Quarter 2018 Financial Update

Your generosity makes a difference! The Sangha continues to be in good shape financially. This allows us to continue to function effectively as a nonprofit, and to be able to offer two annual retreat offerings to Sangha members. In addition, your generous donations to the Teachers helps ensure that they can dedicate their time to study and teaching, benefitting us all tremendously.

Our quarterly account statements are as follows:

Checking:

January 1 beginning balance: \$4,081.54
March 31 ending balance: \$3,382.54

Savings:

January 1 beginning balance: \$6,690.21
March 31 ending balance: \$6,691.86

Income for Sangha is typically from Sunday night Dana as well as Dana from daylong retreats, of which we had two this quarter. In addition, Bill Coffin donated his teacher Dana to the Sangha in February.

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. Monthly rent for our Sunday evenings generally costs between \$600-\$850 per month depending on the number of Sundays.

If you ever have questions about the budget please feel free to reach out to me in person at Sangha or by email at cmx@sonic.net.

In Gratitude,
Cory Bytof
Treasurer,
Marin Sangha Board of Directors

Board Meeting Dates

Meetings of the Board of Directors are going to be held on the third Sunday of the month. If there is a conflict, Linda Howerton-Pritchett will publish any changes to the meeting dates on our Marin Sangha Yahoo Groups. Please check the Yahoo Groups for the exact dates.

Marin Sangha News

Save the Date

Marin Sangha Twentieth Anniversary Party

Save the date, everyone! Our Sangha is holding its Twentieth Anniversary party on Saturday, May 19th, from 6:00 p.m to 9:00 p.m. at Rotary Manor, 1821 Fifth Avenue in San Rafael. We'll have a vegetarian potluck dinner, followed by cake. For more information or to RSVP, contact Deborah Temple at deborah temple@rocketmail.com or 415-785-7341. When you RSVP, please, if you can, let us know what type of dish (appetizer, salad, casserole, veggie side dish...or whatever) you'll be bringing, and the number of people attending. We hope to see you there!

The Chanting of the *Namo*

Some teachers explain that the reason for three repetitions of *Namo* is to allow the mind to really absorb the values of the Buddha and not be distracted while chanting. The mind is habituated to activities which are enslaved to sensual desire, and when moving toward religious activities, it does not easily concentrate on the words of the chant, and will try to diverge into other channels. That is another reason explaining the three repetitions. Thus, the mind is trained to progressively move into a more stable, concentrated mode with each repetition, which are described as follows:

1. *Parikamma*. The first utterance in homage to the Buddha is to set the mind’s intention to stay with the chant, dropping other sensual stimuli, and adhering to the chant only.

2. *Upacara*. The second repetition brings the mind closer to the chant. The mind may not be firmly focused, having recently been consorting with sense desires, and it may be unstable, moving from the chant to its previous mind state.

3. *Appana*. The third repetition establishes the mind firmly into the chant, in absorption, not moving, setting firmly in peace. It is a clear and bright mind, purified and radiant, creating good merit in itself, and being a foundation for other wholesome acts.

Finally, the benefit of three repetitions can be seen as being directed to those who are listening to the chant and paying homage to the Buddha. The chant is strengthened by three repetitions, just as a rope is made stronger when it has three strands instead of one.

- From Legend of Paritta: Protective Chants and Background Stories by Somdech Phramahadhirajahn

Marin Sangha Daylong with Sally Armstrong: Mark your Calendar

Sally Armstrong Daylong
Saturday July 7, 2018
9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
St. Luke Presbyterian Church
10 Bayview Drive
San Rafael, CA. 94901

Sally Armstrong is a much respected and loved teacher. Her teachings are clear, and they present issues of importance in our daily life and in our meditation practice.

When we participate in Sunday night Sangha and in daylongs presented at Marin Sangha, we have the opportunity to support the community and develop shared knowledge and skills that foster discussion with Sangha members in an ongoing exploration of the path to awakening.

Please join the daylong on July 7. More information as to the specific daylong topic will be available soon.

2018 Marin Sangha Schedule of Daylongs and Classes

Sally Armstrong: Topic to Follow
Sangha Daylong
Saturday, July 7
9:30am - 4:30pm
St. Luke Presbyterian Church

Oren J. Sofer: Topic To Follow
Sangha Daylong
Saturday, October 20

9:30am - 4:30pm
St. Luke Presbyterian Church

Bill Coffin & Barbara McHugh
Topic and Schedule to Follow

A Phillip Moffitt Celebration at Spirit Rock

Marin Sangha members joined approximately 200 people to celebrate Phillip Moffitt's years of service as a Co-Guiding teacher at Spirit Rock as he stepped down from that position on Thursday, April 5, at 6:30 p.m. In Spirit Rock's Community Meditation Hall, Sally Armstrong, Co-Guiding teacher; Michelle Latvala, Executive Director of Spirit Rock; Jack Kornfield, Teacher and founder of Spirit Rock; and Dana DePalma, incoming Co-Guiding Teacher, shared stories of Phillip's contributions in his role and of his support of them in their roles. A sampling of thank you cards written by those who attended the ceremony were read. All of the thank you cards were given to him at the end of the evening.

Jack Kornfield commented that in all the years he had known Phillip and in the many situations they had encountered, he had never heard Phillip say an unkind word about anyone. Michelle said that while she could name 108 things that Phillip had done that were significant, she would mention only eight in deference to the audience, who would probably wish to go home by around 8:30. Sally expressed gratitude to Phillip for negotiating so many important changes at Spirit Rock over the years; Dana added that Phillip stayed in his position until it was possible for him to leave. The notes from the audience thanked Phillip for his teachings on retreat and the impact of his teachings on their practice. Many people in the audience stated that they had not realized how much he had done in the role of Co-Guiding Teacher until they heard Sally, Michelle, Dana and Jack speak.

Phillip beamed as he left the platform, signifying the end of his Role as a Co-Guiding Teacher. He will continue to teach retreats at Spirit Rock Meditation Center and elsewhere.

The photo below is a tribute to Phillip and the speakers at this special event.



L-R: Sally Armstrong, Michelle Latvala, Phillip Moffitt,
Jack Kornfield, Dana DePalma

Sangha Member Contributions

The Daily Tejaniya

Feb. 13, 2018

We often use the expression "wandering mind" which seems to suggest that the mind has wandered away, has moved somewhere. The truth is, however, that the mind does not go anywhere; the mind is only happening here and now.

All it does is rise and pass away. A thought about someone far away or about an event in the past or the future is simply a thought that has arisen here and now.

*A daily practice reminder from Sayadaw U Tejaniya
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Lucia Chaudron

Member Profile

We wish to thank **Bill Coffin** for this issue's Member Profile.

Q. How did you get interested in Buddhism?

First, I became interested in meditation. I took a class from James Baraz in 1987, so of course I learned a little bit about Buddhism, too. And I'm a natural wonk, so I started digging deeper into the teachings and the practice.

Q. How did you happen to begin coming to Marin Sangha?

Barbara and I had been to two 3-day retreats, both in 1987. But because of my work, we just couldn't find the time for another retreat for many years. We continued to go to Spirit Rock on Monday nights and participated in other events. Finally we went to another 3-day in 1999. In 2000, I retired and we suddenly had time for something a bit longer. Of course, anything longer than three days was pretty scary, but we were willing to try a 5-day retreat led by someone we'd never heard of named Phillip Moffitt.

We went on the retreat and loved it. And we both loved Phillip and his teaching approach. After the retreat, Barbara said that we should go to his Sunday night gathering. I just knew that we wouldn't sacrifice our Sunday evenings for very long, but I decided to humor her for a week or two. And we're still going....

Q. What would you like other sangha members to know about you such as basic demographics, career, family information, and such?

I'm an old drummer and computer nerd. I earned a living as a drummer for 10 years, and, when I burned out on the drumming career, I played to put myself partway through college. Then I found that I could make a lot more money as a part-time programmer. I got a computer science degree from Cal in 1982, the same year I met Barbara. I worked for ten years as a programmer in product development and then ten years managing other programmers.

Q. Do you have interests that you would like to share with other sangha members or just know about you?

I still play drums, and I'm having a lot of fun playing with a Beatles "tribute" band that leads sing-alongs. We're named The Quarry Persons. For an explanation of the name, you'd have to go to our website, www.QuarryPersons.com.

Barbara and I also love to travel, and in particular we chase solar eclipses. They are very addictive: we've been to nine, although we've been clouded out twice. For more on this, our website is www.Eclipsoid.com.

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

Building a sense of community has always been important to us. When we first started coming, we would drive back to Berkeley and grab dinner at one of the few restaurants still open at 9:00 pm on a Sunday evening. So one night we spoke to Brooke, Phillip's Sangha assistant at the time. I said, "We'd love to start a group of people going out to dinner together after Sangha." And she said, "Great, where will we go?" The three of us went somewhere, and the Sunday dinner practice began.

Within a few years, we had formed some very close friendships with Sangha-mates. And this continues to be the most important aspect of the Sangha for us. We've heard a lot of dharma talks by now, and we're rarely surprised. But the community sustains us.

Q. Would you like your contact information in this newsletter?

I hope anyone would feel comfortable coming up to me and talking at Sangha. I'm also in the Sangha Directory, and you could certainly track down my email if you went to our website, www.Eclipsoid.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: **Apr.15, May 20, June 17.**

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 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.

Member 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.** The Directory will be up dated quarterly. If you would like to add your name to the Directory, please complete the sign-up sheet on the table or contact Lucia at lmchaudron@comcast.net.

Sangha Newsletter

The Sangha Newsletter team is always looking for submissions to the newsletter. If you have a favorite poem, a good photograph or a Dharma lesson that you would like to share please contact either Lucia or Barbara McHugh. All submissions are subject to editing.

Marin Sangha Board of Directors

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

Committees	Contacts
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Newsletter	Lucia Chaudron lmchaudron@comcast.net
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Compassionate Action Committee	Deborah Temple deborah temple@rocketmail.com
Sangha Yahoo Group	Linda Howerton-Prichett l.howerton@sbcglobal.net
Sunday Announcement	Mary Kelly momkelly@comcast.net
Sunday Set-up & Closing	See notebook on the Information Table
Technical Support	Bill Coffin billc@eclipsoid.com

Marin Sangha Newsletter
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for submissions.
All submissions must be in by the 15th of the
last month of the quarter.
All submissions are subject to editing.
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Published Quarterly by Marin Sangha, San Rafael, CA