

# The Meher Baba Washington Gathering

**March 2010 – June 2010**



*Everyone is unconsciously tired of this life because everyone seeks happiness, but knows not how to get it. But life is so beautiful. It is meant to be happy. I will help you. Then things will appear changed. You will see it. It is always the outlook that counts, and not the object. Today you feel tired, upset, seeing nothing beautiful in the things around you in life. If tomorrow you do not feel bored but cheerful, the same things that appeared black yesterday will seem changed. It is all due to changed mentality and outlook. The easy way is not to make much of things. Take them lightly. Say to yourself, "I am meant to be happy, to make others happy," and gradually you do become happy yourself and make others so too. Don't suggest to your mind, "I am tired, haggard, depressed." That will make you feel worse. Always say, "All is well and beautiful. I will be happy." I will help you spiritually.*

Avatar Meher Baba

# News from the Gathering

*When crisis is upon one, let one's thoughts be not for self, but for others – for the claims of the Divine Self which exist equally in all. Those who have been initiated into the eternal values of the inner life must assume the responsibility of driving away unwarranted gloom and depression and cheering those who are in deep sorrow.*

Meher Baba

As we write this newsletter, we seem to be in a state of suspended animation—caught between a long winter blanketed by snow and the faint stirrings of spring. This winter has been marked by frequent crises in the world, ranging from severe earthquakes in Haiti and Chile to heavy snowstorms in the US, many of which hit Washington, DC.

The word “crisis” written in Chinese characters denotes both danger and opportunity. In a recent snow storm which dropped thirty inches of snow in twenty-four hours, we lost both electricity and heat. The aspect of danger became quickly obvious—how long could we survive in blizzard conditions without heat? But there was opportunity within the crisis as well. Families, friends, and neighbors came together for shoveling, gathering firewood, cooking meals, and playing games. In the process, we forged a deep bond that went beyond our usual ways of being together and by helping one another in the midst of adversity we transcended fears about our individual plights.

Perhaps this winter we have been given a glimpse of how to survive difficult times ahead, and an opportunity to put into practice Baba's words quoted above: “When crisis is upon one, let one's thoughts be not for self, but for others...”

## **Amartithi**

We were delighted to have Brian Darnell with us once again sharing his inspired music and poetry on Amartithi weekend. Meher Baba decided to make the weekend even more beautiful by giving us a snowstorm on Saturday, the 30<sup>th</sup>. Although the snow provided a soft and gentle backdrop for Amartithi, it also prevented a number of people from attending. Despite the snow, there were

13 brave souls who made it to the meeting on Saturday night, and even more who were able to attend on Sunday. The efforts of those who came were well rewarded. Brian's songs and poetry evoked a deep sense of Baba's Presence, and seemed a perfect accompaniment to Baba's Eternal Date. We are including one of Brian's poems here, so those who could not come on Amartithi weekend may enjoy it.

## **Reading the Label - by Brian Darnell**

The mystery can't be put into words  
but it can be written in blood;

shaped by the arrangement  
of certain human bones.

Truth walked the earth; took in the view –  
Your rambunctious body

upsetting the bullock cart – pulses aflutter;  
necks craned and blushing,

ears pricked up; heart-throats,  
long empty, suddenly filled with song.

The blood of Jesus is precious  
because it runs thick with the mystery of Love.

Reaching for the hem of Your garment –  
(when You wore Your Jesus robe)  
the infirm woman needed not scripture ...

but the soul-stirring presence of the Soul of souls  
moving majestically through the pressing crowd.

O child of God, please understand –  
reading the wine bottle's label will never make you drunk.

## **Baba's Birthday Celebration**

Baba's Birthday with our special guests Tom and Cathy Riley was a beautiful celebration that began Saturday evening and continued into late Sunday afternoon. Tom shared his wonderful stories of meetings with Baba, focusing especially on the importance of finding Baba within. He described an incident from Baba's 1958 visit to the Meher Center which highlights this theme. He told of a woman who was also at the Center during that time who was a close

friend of Rachel Carson, author of *The Silent Spring*, the first major book of the environmental movement. The woman had been very affected by Rachel Carson's findings about the widespread use of toxic chemical pollutants and pesticides and their threat to the environment. The woman was quite upset by this and found an opportunity to voice her concerns to Meher Baba. Baba listened to her, and then said, "Everything that you say is true. Poisons

are everywhere, but let your focus be on trying your utmost to reveal my sacredness within you, so that you may realize me within.”

Cathy’s concert was a lovely blending of well loved songs from the 1970’s with some of her newer compositions. The richness of Cathy’s voice and depth of feeling moved us all. Two songs that were especially touching expressions of

### **Meher Baba, Lord and Friend**

by Mehera Irani

Meher Baba, Lord and Friend (chorus)  
My Beloved to the end.

You are my heart, my life, my Soul  
You are my all, my only goal  
Jai Jai Jai (chorus)

Beloved I am by Your light  
Your Love-sun makes my moon bright  
Jai, Jai, Jai (chorus)

All day long for You I long  
Sing your Name and Your love-song  
Jai, Jai, Jai (chorus)

### **Bhau Kalchuri’s Surprise Return Visit to the US**

Bhau often states toward the end of his visits that this will be his last trip to the US due to health constraints. Then in late winter, Bhau hints that he may make one more trip, and preparations for his visit begin anew, much to our delight. However, last summer it was obvious to all who saw him just how difficult the journey was for him, and it seemed that

love for Baba were written by Mehera and Mani. Cathy told of receiving a letter from Mani after news had reached India that Cathy and other musicians planned to record an album in Nashville. Mani said that she and Mehera had each written a song, and they wanted Cathy to sing and record them on the new album. Mehera’s song appears below and is a beautiful reminder of her pure love for Beloved Baba.

Though my heart weeps all the while  
For Your sake I wear a smile.  
Jai, Jai, Jai (chorus)

Your dear pleasure is my joy  
Mine is not to question why  
Jai, Jai, Jai (chorus)

You who play the perfect game  
Shape my heart into Your Name  
Jai, Jai, Jai (chorus)

Make me Lord, Your song of praise  
Fill all hearts with Your dear grace  
Jai, Jai, Jai (Chorus)

it truly would be his final trip to the US.

But now, amazingly, we find that Bhau is coming to the US again this spring. He will be at the Meher Center from April 27<sup>th</sup> until May 20<sup>th</sup>. He will then travel to Meherana in Northern California where he will stay until June 30<sup>th</sup>.

Bhau is one of Meher Baba's two remaining resident Mandali and is author of the twenty volume biography *Lord Meher*. We are so fortunate to have this opportunity to be with him and hear his

first-hand stories of life with Meher Baba. The Meher Center will book up quickly, so be sure to call soon for reservations.

## Newsbytes

Welcome to Stuart Baker who recently moved here from Cape Cod, MA.

Congratulations to Mojgan Seyedsafi and Abhishek Kumar who were married on January 12, 2010.

Robert Barton recently exhibited some of his lovely drawings and paintings in an art exhibit sponsored by the Vienna Art Society.

Richard Barton was selected by McLean Youth Basketball as Basketball Coach of the Year. His team also won the season's championship.

Zoe Witkowski was accepted to the Baltimore School for the Arts.

Kamilia Butler Peres is working as a White House intern this semester.

Gavin Elliott was part of a medical relief team in Haiti following the recent earthquake.

A photo by Greg Butler is appearing in the special May issue of *Color* magazine. There will be an exhibition of his photographs at the Meher Center in September.

In His Abiding Love,  
Pamela Butler-Stone & Terry Barton

*If someone abuses us or insults us and becomes the cause of our suffering, or if we are harassed in any way, we should bow down to such a person instead of reacting angrily with him, because he is the means of wiping out our sanskaras (impressions). This is what Jesus meant when he said that if someone strikes you on the right cheek, offer him your left.*

Meher Baba in *Lord Meher*, Vol. 3, page 772



# Calendar of Events



**Saturday, March 13<sup>th</sup>**

**Meher Fund Fundraiser**

Amanda & Larry Traub's home 6:00 PM  
Special evening to raise funds for the Meher Free Dispensary at Meherazad.

**Sunday, March 21<sup>st</sup>**

**Discourse meeting**

Marian Lobred's home 7:00 PM  
Gavin Elliott will facilitate a discussion about one of Baba's *Discourses*. Bring a copy of the *Discourses* if possible.

**Saturday, March 27 Living the New Life in These Extraordinary Times**

Mojgan & Abhishek's home 7:30 PM  
The heat is on! A discussion meeting on how to maintain our poise and live Baba's message of the New Life in these challenging times.

**Saturday, April 10<sup>th</sup> Special Guest Allan Cohen – Personal Growth in Our Lives with Baba**

Pamela Butler-Stone's home 7:30 PM  
This promises to be a lively evening with Allan sharing his insights about the role of personal growth in our relationship with Meher Baba.

**Sunday, April 18<sup>th</sup> Discourse meeting**

Marian Lobred's home 7:00 PM  
Gavin Elliott will facilitate a discussion about one of Baba's *Discourses*. Bring a copy of the *Discourses* if possible.

**Saturday, April 24<sup>th</sup>**

**Film Night**

Terry & Robert Barton's home 7:30 PM  
Let's relive precious times in Mandali Hall with a video of Eruch.

**Sunday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>**

**Discourse meeting**

Marian Lobred's home 7:00 PM  
Gavin Elliott will facilitate a discussion about one of Baba's *Discourses*. Bring a copy of the *Discourses* if possible.

**Saturday, May 8<sup>th</sup>**

**Musical Guest Bill Cliff**

Al Grasso's home 7:30 PM  
Singer/songwriter Bill Cliff will sing some old favorites including "Listen to the Wind," Darwin Shaw's poem which he wrote during the Three Incredible Weeks in 1954.

**Sunday, May 16<sup>th</sup>**

**Discourse meeting**

Marian Lobred's home 7:00 PM  
Gavin Elliott will facilitate a discussion about one of Baba's *Discourses*. Bring a copy of the *Discourses* if possible.

**Sunday, May 23<sup>rd</sup>**

**Mehera's Tea**

Mary Weiss' home 3:00 PM  
Mary will host a women's tea in honor of Mehera's return to her Beloved on May 20, 1989.

**Sunday, May 30<sup>th</sup>**

**Discourse Meeting (last meeting)**

Marian Lobred’s home 7:00 PM  
Gavin Elliott will facilitate a discussion about one of Baba’s *Discourses*. Bring a copy of the *Discourses* if possible.

**Saturday, June 5<sup>th</sup>**

**Special Guest from India, Dr Gadekar**

Murali and Manjusha’s home 4:00 PM  
Dr. Gadekar is from a family of longtime Baba lovers who came to Baba in 1924. His grandfather, a cobbler, made Baba’s treasured sandals which He wore for many years. Dr. Gadekar will share beautiful stories of growing up in Baba’s orbit as well as his wonderful music. There will be a potluck dinner also that evening. Please RSVP to Manjusha.

**Sunday, June 13<sup>th</sup> Readings**

**from Darwin Shaw’s inspired writings**

Robert & Terry Barton’s home 7:00 PM  
Katherine O’Brien, who helped edit Darwin’s Book, *As Only God Can Love*, will lead a discussion on Darwin’s words of wisdom.

**Saturday, June 19<sup>th</sup>**

**Music Evening with Daniel Stone**

Robert & Terry Barton’s home 7:30 PM  
Daniel will perform some of his original compositions as well as a number of Baba favorites.

**Sunday, June 27<sup>th</sup> Readings**

**from Darwin Shaw’s inspired writings**

Robert & Terry Barton’s home 7:00 PM  
Continuing discussion based upon Darwin’s book.

**Meeting Locations**

Name	Address	Phone
Terry and Robert Barton	6669 McLean Dr., McLean, VA	703-883-8093
Al Grasso	10810 Inwood Ave., Wheaton, MD	301-649-5824
Marian Lobred	3215D Sutton Place NW, Wash. DC	202-486-0667
Manjusha & Murali Kalavapudi	8723 Bell Tower Dr., Gaithersburg, MD	301-258-0703
Mojgan & Abhishek Kumar	10214 Bushman Drive #124, Oakton, VA	703-899-6659
Pamela Butler Stone	11227 Dewey Ct., Kensington, MD	301-946-0236
Larry and Amanda Traub	225 S. Pitt St., Alexandria, VA	703-837-9009
Ursula Reichstein	14808 Keeneland Circle, Gaithersburg, MD	301-840-2949
Mary Weiss	6509 Ridgeway Dr., Springfield, VA	703-451-2131