

# Meher Baba Washington Gathering

Newsletter

July – October, 2009



*“Before going to sleep say “Baba, I entrust all that I did to You, thoughts, spoken words, good and bad deeds.” When you wake up say, “Baba, I now begin entrusting all to You.” This much will be more than sufficient for me. Say it only twice a day for five minutes. Do that and make me responsible wholeheartedly for all that you think, speak and do, but wholeheartedly. Then you are free. Nothing can bind you. But you must do it honestly. I am the Ocean. I can accept both fragrant flowers and coconuts, and also filth. So throw everything in the Ocean with all your heart....”*

Avatar Meher Baba

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# Calendar of Events

## **Thursday, July 9<sup>th</sup> Silence Day Eve**

Terry & Robert Barton's Home 7:00 P.M.

Come and join us for an evening of sharing Baba quotes on Silence as well as being together as we merge into His Silence.

## **Sunday, July 12<sup>th</sup> Discourse Meeting**

Marian Lobred's Home 7:00 PM

Our continuing series of Discourse meetings facilitated by Gavin Elliott. If possible, please bring a copy of the Discourses.

## **Saturday, August 1<sup>st</sup> Special Guest Merwan Mistry**

Pamela Butler Stone 7:30 P.M.

Merwan literally grew up in Baba's lap as part of the Dadachanji family. He met Baba shortly after he was born and was given the name Merwan by Baba. Merwan will share his many stories of growing up in Baba's close family circle.

## **Saturday, August 15<sup>th</sup> "His Will, His Pleasure"**

Mojgan Seyedsafi's Home 7:30 P.M.

Enjoy a beautiful film of dearest Katie in remembrance of her life and total dedication to her Beloved Baba.

## **Sunday, August 23<sup>rd</sup> Discourse Meeting**

Marian Lobred's Home 7:00 P.M.

Our continuing series of Discourse meetings facilitated by Gavin Elliott. If possible, please bring a copy of the Discourses.

## **Sunday, September 6<sup>th</sup> Labor Day Benefit Concert featuring special guest, Jamie Newell**

This is a benefit concert to raise funds for Ian McConkey's medical care. Please spread the word and bring friends and family. A flyer will be sent out with all the details as soon as plans are finalized. Please call Terry Barton for further information at 703-346-6616.

## **Monday, September 7<sup>th</sup> Pot Luck Lunch and more of Jamie's great music**

Pamela Butler-Stone's Home 12:00 P.M.

Call Pamela at 301-946-0236 to RSVP and coordinate food contribution.

**Sunday, September 20<sup>th</sup> Discourse Meeting**

Marian Lobred's Home 7:00 P.M.

Our continuing series of Discourse meetings facilitated by Gavin Elliott. If possible, please bring a copy of the Discourses.

**Saturday, September 26<sup>th</sup> Beyond Words - A Film by Louis Van Gasteren**

Terry and Robert Barton's Home

In 1967, Louis Van Gastern was given permission by Baba to come to Meherazad and film Him. Come and see this extraordinary film which includes some of the most beautiful footage ever filmed of Meher Baba.

**Sunday, October 4<sup>th</sup> Discourse Meeting**

Marian Lobred's Home 7:00 P.M.

Our continuing series of Discourse meetings facilitated by Gavin Elliott. If possible, please bring a copy of the Discourses.

**Saturday, October 10<sup>th</sup> New Life Meeting**

Murali and Manjusha's Home 7:30 P.M.

Readings from Bhau's extraordinary and detailed account of the New Life.

**Sunday, October 18<sup>th</sup> Discourse Meeting**

Marian Lobred's Home 7:00 P.M.

Our continuing series of Discourse meetings facilitated by Gavin Elliott. If possible, please bring a copy of the Discourses

**Saturday, October 24<sup>th</sup> Pot Luck Dinner and Game Night**

Mojgan Seyedsafi's Home 6:00 P.M.

Call Mojgan to coordinate your pot luck contribution. Al Grasso will guide us in La Risque (one of Baba's favorite card games) and Spades.

**Meeting Locations**

Terry & Robert Barton	<b>New address</b> - 6669 McLean Dr. McLean, VA	703-883-8093
Pamela Butler-Stone	11227 Dewy Court, Kensington, MD	301-946-0236
Marian Lobred	3215D Sutton Place NW, Washington, DC	202-362-0664
Mojgan Seyedsafi	10214 Bushman Drive #124, Oakton, VA	703-899-6659

# News from the Gathering

Kitty Davy, in her book *Love Alone Prevails*, related how Baba once described death to a group of the Mandali: “Ordinary dying is nothing serious or wonderful. It is like passing from one adventure to another and every adventure needs a suitable medium – the body.... Death appears so fearful but it is usually the fear of the unknown – like an abyss you cannot gauge....When you die there is no longer a link with the body, so you wake up in another form. This goes on from one adventure to another, till you realize Me.” Kitty went on to say that Baba always encouraged us to face the death of a loved one, not with undiluted sadness, but with an alloy – a mixture of happiness and sadness. Sadness for our loss but happiness for their gain.

In the last four months, two of Baba’s strong pillars of Meherazad, Arnavaz Dadachanji and Katie Irani have joined their Beloved Baba. Their lives were the greatest adventures imaginable, filled with Baba’s beautiful physical Presence. Even after Baba dropped His body, their lives were spent in constant dedication to loving and serving Him by tirelessly sharing themselves with the many pilgrims that came to Meherazad. We feel profound gratitude for all that Arnavaz and Katie have given to us over the years, and are moved by the greatness of their love for Baba. Though we will surely miss their lovely presence at Meherazad and their guiding example in our lives, we feel deep joy in their long awaited reunion with Beloved Baba.



Arnavaz and Katie at Meherazad, August 2008 - photo by Pamela Butler-Stone

The following messages were sent out from Meherazad honoring the lives of these extraordinary disciples of the Avatar:

Avatar Meher Baba gathered His dearest Arnavaz Dadachanji into His eternal embrace on Wednesday, 18th February 2009 at 2:34 P.M. in Meherazad. Arnavaz passed away from a heart attack; she was 90 years old. Cremation will be at Meherabad on Thursday, 19th February at 11 A.M.

Arnavaz was blessed to be born into a close family who were brought into Baba's fold by her uncle Chanji, Baba's first secretary. From childhood she was in His frequent company as Baba often visited their home, and she grew up under His loving direction, obeying His every order. At Baba's wish, she married Nariman Dadachanji and they set up an apartment that was to become a home in Bombay for Beloved Baba, Mehera, and the women and men mandali.

When Beloved Baba left on His New Life, He gifted Meherazad to Nariman and Arnavaz, who remained "pillars" of Meherazad when the Beloved returned to stay there and after He dropped His form. Nariman's passing away in 1974 was a great blow to Arnavaz, and soon after Arnavaz moved to Meherazad permanently to be near Mehera and serve Him there. She and Nariman had never had children, and Baba once said that He and Mehera were their children. Arnavaz always held that very close to her heart.

Although she lived in the ordinary world, her one-pointed focus was on Baba, and she gave even her own family the benefit of her wisdom and perspective on Baba and the spiritual life. This she also generously shared with pilgrims who came to Meherazad, through her loving advice and counsel, and through her beautiful book, *Gift of God*, titled after the meaning of her name. Her inspiring life of obedience to the Avatar will serve as a luminous example for generations of Baba-lovers to come, of how to be in the world yet wholeheartedly with the Lord.

We, your Meherazad family, salute you, dearest Arnavaz, for your vital support to Meherazad in your service to the Avatar, and especially for your life of love and surrender to Him.

### **AVATAR MEHER BABA KI JAI!!!**

Avatar Meher Baba's dearest Katie Irani flew into her Beloved's arms on 29/05/09 at 04:10 AM. She passed away from heart failure in Meherazad; she was 89 years old. The cremation will be at 17:30 PM this afternoon 29/05/09 at Meherabad. Katie's ashes will be interred by the east side of His Samadhi on Meherabad Hill.

Born to a family of close Baba followers in Quetta, (India) Katie and her older sister Goher fell in love with Meher Baba as small children. From the time she joined Him on the Blue Bus tours in 1937, Baba gave Katie plenty of scope for her talents. She made Him laugh in funny skits and with amusing stories, entertained Him with her rich and beautiful singing, cooked for His women's ashram. Even after Baba sent her to stay in Bombay to live with Arnavaz and Nariman Dadachanji at the start of the New Life, she

lived under His direct orders always - and did so till the end of her life. Katie worked at the Japanese Embassy in Bombay for 28 years and during this time she often visited Baba and the women mandali in Meherazad and at Guruprasad, Pune where she would regale Baba with the most recent comical events from her life in which the starring role always fell to her. In 1978 when Goher opened the new building for Meher Free Dispensary, she called Katie to stay at Meherazad permanently to assist her in the clinic. And eventually Katie helped in Baba's kitchen -- a job which she diligently performed despite her failing health till the very end.

Katie's vivacious and outgoing personality, wonderful sense of humor (showcased in her hilarious ashram stories), sharing her delicious recipes both personally and through her book, *COOKING WITH KATIE*, and heart-stirring singing of Baba's Name and songs have delighted generations of pilgrims at Meherazad ever since.

We, her Meherazad family, salute our dear Katie's total dedication to her Beloved Avatar, and her untiring service to Him and His close ones.

## **AVATAR MEHER BABA KI JAI!!!**

### **Sahavas with Bhau Kalchuri**

Even though Bhau had said that his trip to the West in 2008 would be his last, he surprised us all by managing to travel once more, in late April 2009, to the United States. Though he was obviously weaker physically, his dedication to sharing Baba's love in his talks and internet chats was undiminished. Bhau's tour this year, as in 2008, was limited to the Meher Center on the East Coast and Meherana, L.A. and the L.A. Sahavas on the West Coast. A number of us from the Meher Baba Washington Gathering were able to make the trip to Meher Center to be with him there, including Saleem, who prepared Indian feasts for Bhau and guests just as he had during Bhau's previous Washington, D.C. visits.

One especially beautiful highlight of Bhau's visit to the Center was his farewell talk in the Barn, which began with prayers from different religions and music by Billy Goodrum, Mariah Potter, Patrick O'Neil, Jeff Wolverton, Nan Wicker, and Walter Witkowski. Bhau seemed to be so touched by the beautiful offerings being bestowed on all present, that he did not seem to mind at all that his own speaking time was shortened to just over a half hour. The atmosphere in the Barn that morning was charged with Baba's Presence and the gathering was a moving finale to the three weeks of Sahavas with Bhauji.

### **Ian McConkey**

Ian is one of our group's incredible young people and the son of Jeannie and Michael McConkey. (Michael has been a frequent and much loved singer /songwriter at our meetings here in Washington.) Ian turned 19 on June 5<sup>th</sup> and was diagnosed with a malignant brain tumor on the same day. Because of the extremely high medical costs

associated with this treatment and the absence of medical insurance, there are two benefit concerts planned to help raise funds. The first concert will feature Jamie Newell in the Washington, D.C. area on Sunday, September 6<sup>th</sup> during Labor Day weekend. We are still researching possible venues and a flyer will be sent out with all of the details. If anyone has suggestions for a concert location, please contact Pamela Butler Stone at 301-946-0236.

The second concert will be held near the McConkey's home in Afton, VA. on September 19<sup>th</sup> at the Rock Fish Community Center. The entertainment features a "Beatles" band and the music of Michael McConkey. If you are interesting in attending, call Pamela Butler Stone at 301-946-0236. Ian and his family have spoken of how much they feel Baba with them during this time, and they are deeply appreciative of the loving thoughts and prayers of their friends in the Baba community.

### **Robert Weiss**

Robert and his wife Mary moved to the Washington, DC area in August 2005 from the San Francisco Bay area. They are known for their quiet, strong and steady presence and have been an intergral part of the Meher Baba Washington Gathering since moving here. Robert and Mary were among those from DC who were at the Meher Center during Bhau's recent visit. It was during that visit that Robert began feeling ill. His symptoms continued to worsen and on Friday, June 26<sup>th</sup> he entered Inova Fairfax Hospital. Robert is now back home and continuing treatment for a serious illness.

If anyone would like to be in touch, the Weiss' address is 6509 Ridgeway Dr., Springfield, VA 22150. Their phone number is 703-451-2131. Mary has asked that we in the Baba community keep them both in our thoughts and prayers.

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

### **Meher Baba Washington Gathering Workerwallas**

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