

# Dharma Stream

MOUNTAIN STREAM MEDITATION CENTER



March 2012 through September 2012

## Magic is Unfolding Matching Grant

by Otis Wollan  
- Nevada City Sangha

Magic is unfolding right now in our midst, when teachings and practice mingle, and become one. It is when vision and hope snap back to the present moment as action, and the formless takes form. Pay attention.

It's happening just over the way at Zion Street where Mountain Stream is breaking ground with a great deal of help from all its friends.

Generosity is a foundation teaching in our practice. It is named first in the ten perfections. Sylvia Boorstein calls it "the beginning and the end of the path." Generosity sustained the Buddha day-to-day, when he chose to spread the word with simply a bowl and a robe to carry an open heart and a clear mind. And generosity has sustained the teachers of the Dharma throughout the stream of history to this day. Teachers supported and temples built from generosity alone, giving in return at no cost one simple gift—the priceless teachings and practices of freedom and true happiness.

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We have received a \$5,000 donation for the heating system of the new Zion Street Center. In addition, if we can raise another \$5,000, the donor will match that amount for a total of \$15,000. So far we have raised \$4300, so we only need about \$700 more to match. Every dollar you donate brings 2 dollars to Mountain Stream.

This is a wonderful gift to Mountain Stream, as we need to put a completely new heating system into the Center. If you would like to give to this matching grant, please mark your check "Heating System Matching Grant" and send it to:

Mountain Stream,  
P.O. Box 1644,  
Grass Valley, CA 95945

Thank you!

## In This Issue

This issue has a number of articles relating to our theme: Community Service and Practice. Otis tells the story of our new Dharma Center and the volunteers building it. David Judd writes about his experiences as a hospice volunteer, and K.C. Covert shares how Mountain Stream volunteers prepare and serve meals to the homeless. David Blatte explores the balance between deeply delving into the Dharma and making a contribution to society. Maeve Hassett discusses "letting go" versus "pushing away," and how that relates to an open heart. Lorelle Chorkey writes about how awareness can lift us out of conflicts and into freedom. Donna Hogue tells about her niece and how generosity brought dental work. Bruce Kristal writes about seeing a sign and the wonderful machinations that ensued. Steve Solinsky has been practicing Qi Gong and shares how great that has been. Also, poetry by Ellen McBride, Vitskaia Fernandes and Eddie Henderson.

Be sure to see our full-color complete newsletter online at [www.mtstream.org](http://www.mtstream.org), then click "E-Newsletter."



**DHARMA STREAM**

is the newsletter of Mountain Stream Meditation Center, a nonprofit corporation.

We invite you to send a \$10 or \$25 donation to help defer some of the costs of production and mailing. If you send us your email address we can email your newsletter instead of mailing it. Saving on the rising costs of printing and postage is gratefully appreciated.

Please send generosity checks and mailing list additions/deletions to:

Mt. Stream Meditation Center  
P.O. Box 1644  
Grass Valley, CA 95945-1644  
email: [newsletter@mtstream.org](mailto:newsletter@mtstream.org)  
[www.mtstream.org](http://www.mtstream.org)

We appreciate and consider all contributions to the newsletter. Please send articles, commentaries, book reviews, photos, art and poetry to the above address or email [newsletter@mtstream.org](mailto:newsletter@mtstream.org). Submissions may be edited to fit the format of the newsletter.

Other contributions to Mountain Stream are gratefully appreciated. We can exist and continue to work on community due to your generosity. Our teachers and staff at retreats also are dependent on your dana as well.

Dana is a Pali word meaning **GENEROSITY**. Dana is traditionally offered at sitting groups, classes, and retreats to support the teachers and retreat staff to continue their Dharma work. Registration charges do not cover the teachings which are freely given because they are considered priceless. Nor does registration cover the retreat cook or manager. Donations to Mountain Stream may be tax deductible in accordance with the law.



## Magic is Unfolding

continued from front page

So pay attention when this happens in our own community. Look at what is unfolding right now. Five years ago the vision of an urban center to support practitioners emerged as the primary strategic goal of the Mountain Stream Board. An angel emerged and we acquired a building and beautiful land in the middle of Nevada City/Grass Valley. Dozens have given their time and attention to develop the transformation plans. When professionals were needed, they deeply discounted their time. Dozens have given their time to begin grounds preparation. And now, as we break ground, the core construction team are Sangha

members, working either without pay, or at a small fraction of their normal rate.

Their work day begins with formal practice, unfolds as Karma Yoga, and ends with formal practice. A matching grant has been offered for the heating/cooling system, and a \$10,000 gift was given for removal of the pool and restoration landscaping. An outreach is underway soliciting help— from a few hours or day or weekend or week to whatever dollars can be afforded. The whole project is an expression of generosity giving the priceless teachings a home in the Sierra.

So in this strange land of the hungry ghost, with the petty bickering and the deep suffering of hunger, confusion, violence and poverty amidst plenty—pay attention when the teaching and the practices mingle and become one. Ponder in this moment of Occupy Wall Street, a project that transforms a beautiful home for the wealthy one per cent to a Dharma home for the one hundred percent, for all time.

Please accept our invitation to join this expression at whatever level is right for you. One of the great benefits of practicing generosity together is simply being among others engaged in the full experience of generosity.

Come on down. We're in the middle of it.



AsianArtMuseumofSanFrancisco

Photo taken by  
Cherry DuLaney



## Dharma Lessons from Hospice

by David Judd - Bear River Meditation Group and Auburn Sangha

In the Majjhima Nikaya Sutta *To Subha*, the Buddha teaches that loving kindness is a path to Enlightenment:

*"What, student, is the path to the company of Brahma? Here a Bhikku abides pervading one quarter with a mind imbued with Loving-Kindness, likewise the second, likewise the third, likewise the fourth; so above, below, around, and everywhere, and to all as to himself, he abides pervading the all-encompassing world with a mind imbued with loving-kindness..."*

"You are so kind and generous," some say when they learn that I am a hospice volunteer. They can't imagine sitting next to a dying person, trying to comfort her during the last days. Death is that dark reality of life long ignored by most. But I know a different truth about the dying.

And I know a different truth about myself. Kindness and generosity are not gifts that I give. Rather, they are gifts that I receive. To be sure, loving-kindness is at work in the intimate exchange between the dying and their final witnesses. However, it is through the faces of the patients, my special friends, that the light of love shines. It is through their eyes, not mine, that the most kindness is conveyed. At best, I am a hapless and awe-struck mediator between two worlds.

"How are you, young man?" was

his favorite greeting. "Sit down and let me tell you a little bit more about The Great War. We may not have time for the whole story." And the quiet, raspy voice continued to tell the tale of a life of courage, fear, heartbreak, joy and despair. The golden thread that connected each chapter was a vibrant and enduring love. A love of friends, a love of family, and a love of fresh, sweet coffee in a moment of peace and safety. Kindness and compassion, too, were blended into the fabric of this long and wonderful life. And he showered these gifts upon me as the hours passed. His face lit up with joy. He beamed with an inner delight. So grateful was he to have a listener to his lyrical tales of adventure.

And what a powerful lesson of Enlightenment each of my special friends provides. I must merely be present and give a friendly smile. In response, they share the most intimate secrets of a life filled with love and compassion. They focus on what is valued and what is true. They feel no need to conceal their sorrows or their joys. Few waste time on resentment and despair.

Most say that the greatest path in life is paved with kindness and compassion. Their loving hearts become the greatest lessons of the Dharma. My greatest promise to them is that I listen deeply, and learn.

I recently pondered Zen Master Dogen's teaching that Practice and

Enlightenment are the same. When we practice Dharma we manifest Enlightenment. Likewise, our acts of kindness and compassion are the truth revealing itself.

In *What the Buddha Thought*, Richard Gombrich argues that Loving-Kindness is a direct pathway to Enlightenment. As one of the Brahma-Viharas, or divine abodes, acts of loving-kindness allow an abiding in salvation.

Some time ago one of my special friends (we'll call her Rose, for she was a rose to me), showed me how the grace of kindness fulfilled and illuminated her life. Well into her eighties and weakened by cancer, her special brilliance shone in every glance and smile. Tender stories of the old country; grandchildren; loved ones lost; and a vibrant love of life kept me enchanted during many a weekly visit. I played the violin when she was too tired to speak. And toward the end, she placed her weak and fragile hand on mine for support.

That touch will remain with me forever as a cherished reminder of the kindness that she so gracefully displayed. I can only hope that I keep my promise well.

*Due to the confidential nature of hospice communication, all references to patients have been fictionalized.*



## A Buddhist Dilemma

by David Blatte  
- Nevada City Sangha



Ever since I left my job to delve more deeply into the dhamma, I've struggled with the question of whether I'm being selfish, wondering if I have a moral obligation to contribute to society. A few years ago I was discussing this dilemma with a well-respected vipassana teacher, and her response was quick and emphatic. "That's your problem!"

When the Buddha attained Enlightenment, it was not a foregone conclusion that he would go into the world and teach. In fact, he was initially inclined to inaction. He wasn't sure that his teachings would be understood and as a result it would be "wearying and troublesome" for him. It wasn't until a being from the Brahma-world came down to earth and beseeched him to teach that he made his decision.

This story has always struck me as curious. I thought that compassion—which the Buddha embodied—necessarily leads to engagement with the world, that it naturally entails action. How could a compassionate being not choose to try and help those who are suffering? Why would the Buddha even hesitate?

The answer may be found in another paramount Buddhist quality, that of equanimity—accepting things the way they are, understanding that a being's suffering is the result of his or her kamma.

When looking upon suffering,



AsianArtMuseumofSanFrancisco

Photo taken by  
Cherry DuLaney

then, compassion inspires us to act, but equanimity tempers the desire, reminding us that when we do choose to act, we do so without attachment.

Perhaps wisdom lies in finding the right combination of these two *brahma-viharas*, a delicate balancing of the proactive energy of compassion with the unseeking dispassion of equanimity. In striking this balance, it may be useful to consider whether it is our suffering that motivates us or the suffering of another. Then, when inclined to inaction, mindfulness

can help us discern the fine line between equanimity and apathy.

I have not yet found this balance. Instead, I continue along the path, diligently cultivating compassion and equanimity, hoping that eventually I'll gain the wisdom to let go of my dilemma.

My hope is that one day I'll finally be able to understand that, as my teacher suggested, it's really not my problem.



# Mountain Stream Meditation Center

## Retreats & Events

Mar 2012 through Sept 2012

March 16, 17, 18, Fri, Sat, Sun  
Fri, Evening Talk  
Sat, Sun - Daylong  
Mindfulness of Breathing (Sat)  
Awareness of Awareness (Sun)  
Marv Treiger  
Auburn, CA  
Susan: Susans@mtstream.org

April 18 - 25, Wed - Wed  
7-Night Residential Retreat  
Heather Sundberg, Donald Rothberg  
Spirit Rock Meditation Center  
Woodacre, CA  
More information & registration go to  
[www.spiritrock.org](http://www.spiritrock.org)  
415-488-0164

April 20 - 25, Fri - Wed  
5-Night Residential Retreat  
John Travis  
Sun Valley, Idaho  
Kristin: 208-721-2583  
[naturewalker7@gmail.com](mailto:naturewalker7@gmail.com)  
Janet: 208-720-1824  
[janetabro@cox.net](mailto:janetabro@cox.net)

April 28, Sat  
Daylong  
Awareness, Understanding and  
Kindness  
John Travis  
Nevada County Library Community  
Room  
Nevada City, CA  
[joyce@mtstream.org](mailto:joyce@mtstream.org)

May 5 - 6, Sat - Sun  
Two Daylongs  
John Travis  
Reno/Carson City, NV  
[www.dharmazephyr.org](http://www.dharmazephyr.org)

May 13 - 20 Sun - Sun  
7-Night Residential Retreat  
John Travis, Gil Fronsdal, Mary Orr,  
Andrea Fella  
Spirit Rock Meditation Center  
Woodacre, CA  
[www.spiritrock.org](http://www.spiritrock.org)  
415-488-0164

May 31 - June 3, Thurs - Sun  
3-Night Residential Retreat  
John Travis  
Bodega Bay, CA  
Amy: 530-795-2408  
[ajboyer@gmail.com](mailto:ajboyer@gmail.com)

June 2, Sat  
Daylong  
Heather Sundberg  
Nevada City, CA  
Susan: SusanS@mtstream.org

\*\*Nov 7 - 14, Wed - Wed  
7-Night Residential Retreat (HAWAII)  
\*\*Registration Deadline June 15  
John Travis, Heather Sundberg  
Kailua Kona Big Island, Hawaii  
Catrinka: 808-885-3855  
[catrinka@mtstream.org](mailto:catrinka@mtstream.org)

June 8 - 16, Fri - Sun  
9-Night Residential Retreat  
John Travis, Heather Sundberg  
Sierra Friends Center, Nevada City, CA  
Jenna: [jenna@mtstream.org](mailto:jenna@mtstream.org)

July 22, Sun  
Daylong  
Sister Santacitta  
Nevada City,  
[Registrar@mtstream.org](mailto:Registrar@mtstream.org)

July 27 - August 5, Fri - Sun  
9-Night Residential Retreat  
John Travis  
Boulder, CO  
Lois: [drLoisVk@gmail.com](mailto:drLoisVk@gmail.com)

August 3 Fri, 7PM - 9PM  
Phillip Moffitt  
Emotional Chaos to Clarity:  
The Power of Mindfulness and  
Intention to Support Skillful Living  
Benefit for Mountain Stream  
Meditation Center  
Esterly Hall  
336 Crown Point Circle  
Grass Valley, CA  
Naima: [benefit@mtstream.org](mailto:benefit@mtstream.org)

August 10 - 17, Fri - Fri  
7-Night Residential Retreat  
John Travis  
North Carolina  
[www.southernDharma.org](http://www.southernDharma.org)

August 19 - 23 Sun - Thurs  
4-Night Residential Retreat  
John Travis  
Camp Galilee at Lake Tahoe  
Renate: 775-233-5878  
[renate@dharmaZephyr.org](mailto:renate@dharmaZephyr.org)

Sept 10 - 16, Mon - Sun  
6-Night Residential Retreat  
John Travis, Dennis Warren  
Sacramento Insight Meditation  
Angela Center, Santa Rosa, CA  
[www.sactolnsight.org](http://www.sactolnsight.org)

Oct 5 - 14, Fri - Sun  
9-Night Residential Retreat  
John Travis  
Jackson, WY  
[www.tetonSangha.com](http://www.tetonSangha.com)

Oct 19 - 28, Fri - Sun  
9-Night Residential Retreat  
John Travis  
Oakwood Retreat Ctr at Rainbow Farm  
Selma, IN  
Barb: 513-542-5258  
[Sangha@triStateDharma.org](mailto:Sangha@triStateDharma.org)  
[www.triStateDharma.org](http://www.triStateDharma.org)

Oct 31 - Nov 4, Wed - Sun  
4-Night Residential Retreat  
Buddhism and The 12 Steps  
Heather Sundberg & Kevin Griffin  
Vajrapani Institute  
Boulder Creek, CA  
[www.kevingriffin.net](http://www.kevingriffin.net)

Nov 7 - 14 Wed - Wed  
John Travis, Heather Sundberg  
Kailua Kona Big Island, Hawaii  
Please click here for flyer  
Catrinka: 808-885-3855  
[catrinka@mtstream.org](mailto:catrinka@mtstream.org)

*For the most up to date  
retreat information, please  
visit our website at:  
[www.mtstream.org](http://www.mtstream.org)*



*Contributions of any amount are  
always welcome. We especially  
appreciate dana earmarked for our  
new Nevada City Center.*

Nevada City Sitting Group Teacher Schedule

Wild Mountain Yoga Center - Monday 7:30 - 9:00 pm.  
Mar 12 Mary Helen Fein  
Mar 19 TBA  
Mar 26 Dennis Warren  
Apr 2 John Travis  
Apr 9 John Travis  
Apr 16 John Travis  
Apr 23 John Travis  
Apr 30 Heather Sundberg  
May 7 John Travis  
May 14 Heather Sundberg  
May 21 John Travis  
May 28 John Travis  
Jun 4 John Travis  
Jun 11 Heather Sundberg  
Jun 18 John Travis  
Jun 25 John Travis

Auburn Sitting Group Teacher Schedule

Canyon Spirit Yoga Center - Tuesday 7:30 - 9:00 pm.  
Mar 13 Tina Rasmussen & Stephen Snyder  
Mar 20 Tony Bernard  
Mar 27 Maeve Hassett  
Apr 3 Heather Sundberg  
Apr 10 Mary Helen Fein  
Apr 17 Heather Sundberg  
Apr 24 Tony Bernard  
May 1 Heather Sundberg  
May 8 Mary Helen Fein  
May 15 Heather Sundberg  
May 22 Maeve Hassett  
May 29 Heather Sundberg

Board Meetings

Board meetings are open to all. Please be sure to call as the locations listed are tentative. Potluck begins at 5:00 pm. Meeting at 6:00 pm.  
Mar 25 Kathleen Hare  
Apr 15 TBA  
May 13 TBA  
Jun 17 TBA  
Jul 8 TBA  
Aug 12 TBA

Dharma Talks by John Travis

John Travis's Dharma talks are available on our website. Please visit [www.mtstream.org](http://www.mtstream.org) for more information. You can download and listen to over 80 talks. Enjoy!

Area Sitting Groups

Auburn  
Canyon Spirit Yoga Ctr  
538 Auburn Ravine  
Tues—7:30–9:00 PM  
Mary Helen 530-887-9400  
[maryhelen@mtstream.org](mailto:maryhelen@mtstream.org)

Carson City, NV  
Dharma Zephyr Sangha  
Methodist Church  
213 N. Minnesota  
Mon—7:00–8:30 PM  
[info@dharmazephyr.org](mailto:info@dharmazephyr.org)

West Wind Sangha  
Methodist Church  
213 N. Minnesota  
Wed—6:30–8:30 PM  
Terrah 775-841-3921  
[terrah@netzero.net](mailto:terrah@netzero.net)

Chico  
Thurs—7:00–8:30 PM  
Dharma Study Group  
Nancie 530-898-9139

Heart of the Lotus Sangha  
Tues—6:30–8:15 PM  
Joanne 530-895-1579  
[juanarojas@aol.com](mailto:juanarojas@aol.com)

Davis  
Thurs—7:00–8:30 PM  
Jenna 530-756-4494  
[www.davisinsightgroup.org](http://www.davisinsightgroup.org)

Mon—7:00–9:00 PM  
and 2nd Saturdays  
9:00 am–12:30 PM  
Tony & Toni 530-758-2904

Marysville - Yuba City, CA  
James: [wagnerjjj@yahoo.com](mailto:wagnerjjj@yahoo.com)

Minden/Gardnerville, NV  
Minden Meditation Group  
Johnson Lane Area  
Tues—6:30–8:00 PM  
Lorelle 775-267-1193  
[lorelle@dharmazephyr.org](mailto:lorelle@dharmazephyr.org)

Nevada City/Grass Valley  
Wild Mountain Yoga Ctr  
574 Searls Avenue  
Mon—7:30–9:00 PM  
Barbara 530-272-6425  
[barbara@mtstream.org](mailto:barbara@mtstream.org)

North San Juan, CA  
Tues—7:30-9:00 pm  
(Opportunity for Tea After)  
Your Place, Too  
Near Oak Tree  
(Call for Directions)  
Bruce: 530 277-3470  
[bruce\\_pardoe@yahoo.com](mailto:bruce_pardoe@yahoo.com)

Placerville  
Monday 7:00-8:30  
Will 530-626-6579  
[mettaphoto@mac.com](mailto:mettaphoto@mac.com)  
Sierra Insight Sangha  
Wed—6:30-8:00 PM  
Gale: 530-621-3089  
[galesrespect@gmail.com](mailto:galesrespect@gmail.com)  
[sue@boegerwinery.com](mailto:sue@boegerwinery.com)

Dayton, NV  
Mon—7:00–8:30 pm  
Deborah 775-246-0211

Reno, NV  
St. John's Church  
1070 West Plumb Lane  
Mon—6:30–8:15 PM  
Janet 775-690-0752

One River Sangha  
Northern Nevada HOPES  
467 Ralson Street  
Tues—6:30-8:15 PM  
Frank 775-813-7155  
[www.oneriversangha.com](http://www.oneriversangha.com)  
[oneriversangha@gmail.com](mailto:oneriversangha@gmail.com)

Rocklin/Roseville  
Rocklin Montessori School  
5250 Fifth Street  
Mon—6:30–8:00 pm  
Donna 916-532-6955  
Elke 916-632-8766  
[donna@mtstream.org](mailto:donna@mtstream.org)  
[elke@mtstream.org](mailto:elke@mtstream.org)

Sacramento  
Sun—7:00–8:45 PM  
Sacramento Buddhist  
Meditation Group  
[www.smbg.org](http://www.smbg.org)  
[info@smbg.org](mailto:info@smbg.org)

2nd & 4th Thurs  
7:00–9:15 PM  
Sacramento Insight Meditation  
[www.sactoinsight.org](http://www.sactoinsight.org)  
[info@sactoinsight.org](mailto:info@sactoinsight.org)

Truckee  
Thurs—6:45–9:00 PM  
[cathynason@sbcglobal.net](mailto:cathynason@sbcglobal.net)

South Lake Tahoe  
Penny 530 541-1610  
[pennyfairfield@bmwmotorcycletech.info](mailto:pennyfairfield@bmwmotorcycletech.info)





## Letting Go

by Maeve Hassett  
- Auburn Sangha

This morning in a discussion period after I'd given a talk, someone asked me to give my view of the difference between pushing away and letting go. I gave an answer that didn't quite feel complete to me, and after the session I kept thinking about the question. What comes to me now is that the main difference is that pushing away is an act of contraction and separation whereas letting go is an act of release and expansion into non-separateness. There's no fear involved in letting go, in fact it is an act of faith. As Teja Bell might say, it's dissolving practice.

This practice of letting go and of expansion covers a lot of territory. There's the letting go of the shoulds and the oughts. There's the letting go of wants and the want nots. Ultimately there's the letting go of control or the illusion of control.

On a recent retreat I found I was sending the wish to myself that I soften around the edges. We're all in this together and the more I let myself know that and feel it at every level, the less I feel the need to grab on to anything, ideas, outcomes, money, time, you name it. It's all part of this ongoing transformational exchange that happens at every level.

So is there really anything to grab on to or to let go of? It's the separateness that's an illusion. It's

interesting that often it is in times of crisis perhaps when people feel there's nothing more to lose or maybe they realize what they hung onto so tightly isn't what counts, that generous, open hearted, creative energy among people flourishes. When we give of ourselves for the benefit of others we are opening ourselves to a feeling of inner abundance.

The Buddha said no true spiritual life is possible without a generous heart. It's the cultivation of open heartedness that leads to generosity of spirit. So my metta and my mantra these days is "May I live with an open heart," and I send this wish to you. May you also live with an open heart and may you receive all the joy that open heartedness brings.

Asian Art Museum  
of San Francisco  
Photo taken by  
Cherry DuLaney







## The Practice of Meditation

by Lorelle Zenko Chorkey - Carson Valley Meditation

On a primary level we meditate to become aware of the programmed conditioning (lies) that develop a self-loathing inner dialogue versus continual trust in who we really are.

Problems caused in linear thinking inhibit our internal realization to an expanded experience of life.

Meditation reveals thoughts, and the effects they have in our relationship to ourselves and others.

Awareness allows us to realize that we can choose the thoughts and perspectives that allow us to contribute to co-operation versus conflict, for the good of all.

On more advanced levels of meditation, we go beyond understanding / changing our internal nature, to experiencing open space, free of mind / ego driven thought.

Deep meditation allows the experience of peace at the core of all life, beyond personality,

visual impressions and physical existence.

True sparkling clarity is ever present at the core of existence, free of bias, judgments, guilt and all such aggressive conflict.

Meditation returns us to that place of freedom from which we all originate.



Sangha at Work!  
Photo by Stuart Clancy  
-Auburn Sangha  
After a Photo by Sharon Lane  
-Nevada City Sangha





## A Poem

by Ellen McBride  
- Rocklin Sangha

In this emptiness and sadness,  
this disquieting place  
a space of not knowing.

Before,  
a moment, yet years, of vacuous quiescence.  
whisperings of solitude  
stretching into forever

An avalanche of softness and movement  
ripening cascade of awakening  
thundering upheaval

Spellbound into now

My heart is opening  
to this richness of discovery

Namaste,



## A Poem

by Eddie Henderson  
- East Bay Meditation

RESET

911 WAKE UP call

Not what I wanted

Was it?

Looking toward twenty twelve

With compassion

I expect no further resistance

Hello me

I have missed you



## A Poem

by Vitskaia Fernandes  
- Nevada City Sangha

You will continue  
It is What Is  
Since The Beginning  
When animals came  
Used it in their ways  
Regardless of name

Hundreds of thousands of years  
Seeing many tears  
Births and deaths of billions of  
beings  
It picked up all vibes  
It holds all tribes

Absorbing, absorbing  
The waters so thick  
Thick with the suffering  
Thick with the joys  
Debris flowing slowly  
Motor boat noise

Wholly, Holy River  
People waded in  
Doing their business  
Like herds did before

Wholly full  
Wholly awesome  
Wholly, slowly moving

Ahhh, to float as dead body  
Along miles and miles  
To be seen and to add to  
The millinium of trials  
Ganga has watched it all  
Billions of times

Proof of impermanence  
We're nothing and everything  
Holy and Not  
Just as the River  
In movement we're caught



## The Thought Became Action

by Donna Hogue - Rocklin Sangha

I had lost contact with my 27 year old niece Jenny for over 5 years. She was my niece by marriage, and when my marriage ended family alliances caused a great divide. I missed her and her two sisters dearly; I had known them since they were born. The years passed and I wondered if I would ever see any of them again.

I was walking my dog out at the lake about a month ago and I heard someone shout, "Aunt Donna!" I turned and saw it was Jenny. As I walked towards her I felt a surge of love and tenderness. She blurted out that she was afraid I didn't want anything to do with her or her sisters; I told her I had thought it was the other way around. Through tears we laughed, our conversation ended with hugs and an exchange of phone numbers.

Jenny is married and the mother of two young children. Financial issues had kept her from dental care for years and I couldn't help but notice her teeth looked awful. As she talked to me she held her hand up to her mouth to try and block the sight of her blackened, decayed front teeth. Even her slightest smile would cause her head to go down and her hand to go up to shield her teeth from me.

I was beyond happy that I had just seen her, but very distressed over her dental situation. I felt compelled to do something about her teeth, but I did not have the

financial means to do so. My desire to help became huge, like I was on a mission. I started thinking of how I could get donations to offset the dental costs. Garage sale? Solicit friends and family? I explained the situation to my daughter, forcefully telling her, "Someone has to do something!" Down deep, I knew that someone was me.

I have had the same dentist for the past fifteen years. I remembered reading that he had done philanthropic work in Peru. The next day I dropped a letter off at his office explaining the situation and asked if he could help in any way. He called me that afternoon. He said to have Jenny make an appointment and he would see what he could do. The lump in my throat made it difficult for me to express my gratitude but I managed to squeak out my thank you.

After meeting with Jenny he called to tell me the course of treatment and he would do it for no charge. Within two appointments, Jenny had a brand new beautiful smile. She came and saw me and we broke into happy tears. Excitedly she told me how she is practicing keeping her hand down when



she opens her mouth, and now she just wants to smile and talk to everyone! Her joy was all over her face and I will never forget her saying to me, "It's like a dream come true!"

My chance encounter with Jenny that day at the lake turned into a thought. That compassionate thought gathered momentum and became intent. The intent turned into action and the action turned out to be a generous deed done by my dentist. It was a path of good intentions that led to the biggest smile ever for Jenny, and an even bigger smile in my own heart.



## Awakening on the Dharma Road to the Heart

by Steve Solinsky - Nevada City Sangha

This life is like a crazy round of poker, Played in the pitch dark, for infinite stakes, with unspoken rules. Or, is it all just a dream? Or, some strange and mysterious, forgetful game of Solitaire?

Cards anyone? It's a daunting game, this life. As the Buddha warned, you can ultimately trust only that source deep inside.

As an aspiring bodhisattva, I wish to see others benefit in ways I have. Several years ago my life was unfolding to plan, when, out of the blue, I suffered a serious cerebral stroke. Ironically, I would come to regard it as a stroke of luck. I began the conventional rounds of the usual therapies, until my wife, Susan, encouraged me to sign up for a qigong class in Nevada City.

I was introduced to a particular movement series I really enjoyed, "Awakening the Soul" as conceived by Chinese master Li Jun Feng. Since this discovery, I start each day with this movement form, and follow it with my regular daily meditation practice. The qigong seems to deepen my meditation.

Every morning I perform the same ritual: Standing, I ground myself on the massive outcropping of granite flanking our patio. As the first rays of the sun warm my face, I begin the sequence with a fluid series of movements combining breath with mindful contemplation.

Little did I suspect it would alter my life. Over the months and now years, I have adapted the sequence to suit my own esthetic, and the expressive movements to maximize the flow of chi and the feeling state generated by the exercise. My gut sense is: it's the depth of sensation / feeling that generates the power to actually open the heart and heal the body.

A greater intensity of feeling works to deepen the process. It's akin to rewiring the "body electric" to carry a higher and more life-enhancing current.

After months of this spiritual ritual, I noticed a shift in my basic

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Photo by  
Steve Solinsky



## Awakening on the Dharma Road to the Heart

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sense of well being. First, I felt the recurring urge to pause during the day, surrendering to awe, in witness of the magnificent beauty around me. My walks through our rural neighborhood were occasions of gratitude and joy, basking in the light of Nature's creation. I experienced an affinity to everything I witnessed: the corralled donkeys and horses down the road, the squabbling squirrels leaping through the oaks, the scattered leaves on the road, the rocks, it didn't matter.

After years as a photographer, I had never held such a deep loving sense for the natural world surrounding me. Sometimes, privately, and out of neighbors' view, I admit I hugged trees, all the time imagining the squawking jays were only protesting above in jealousy. Feeling blessed, I found myself One with the World.

At every opportunity, I give thanks for my good fortune in this life. Gratitude arises naturally, only to expand the heart ever wider. I ease into an integral peace of harmony and balance. Total equanimity. Love seems to expand, enlarging upon itself. Happily, these exquisite feelings persist, and do not wane, as sometimes I've experienced post-retreat.

Eventually it strikes me, "This is beginning to feel really Good!" In reading Ken Wilber, I find a section that sounds familiar, where he describes a stage of conscious evolution he calls "Integral",

where the separation between self and other stretches very thin. There's a shift from an outlook of self-concern, to service to others. Generous and compassionate acts flow freely and arise not from any morality, but a sense of overflowing fullness and abundance.

Of course, I've continued the qigong practice. I relish the opportunities when traveling to perform this ritual movement in a natural, spacious setting—an ocean beach, the shoreline of a mountain lake, a rocky peak. Freed in these spaces, the spirit really soars. And, if by circumstance, I

don't have time to do any other discipline, just by releasing into gratitude, I've deepened my Dharma practice. Qigong has become my most available and dependable daily practice. I can do it anywhere, anytime. It adds ease and power to everything else I do.

I bless,  
And, I am blessed.  
And I hope you are, too.

For online video of Master Li "Awakening the Heart, Initial movements 1-5," search [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) for Awakening the Heart, or go to [www.shenzhen.org](http://www.shenzhen.org).



Photo by  
Steve Solinsky





# Hospitality House

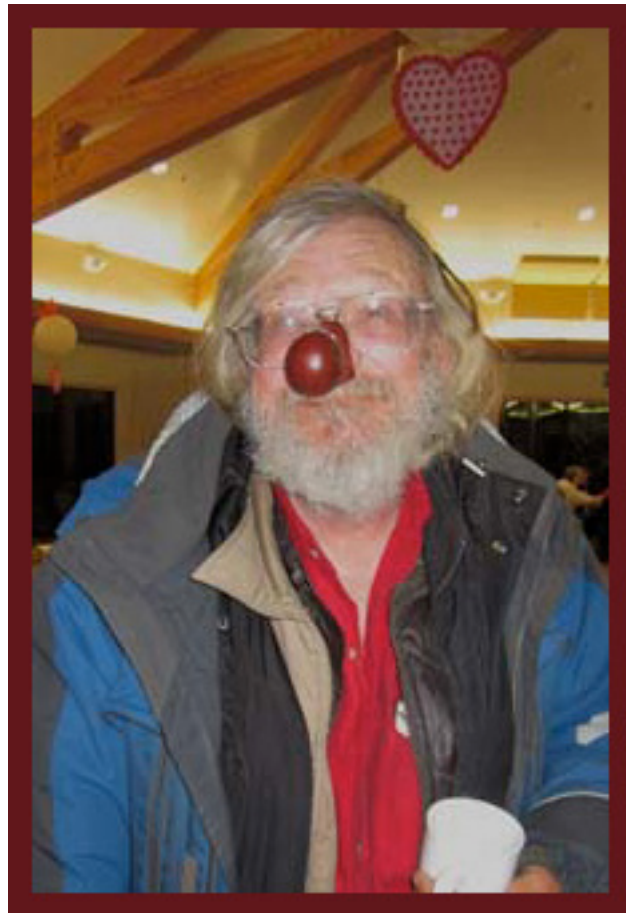
by K.C. Covert  
- Nevada Ciity Sangha

Mountain Stream participants have the opportunity to expand their own sense of well being while caring for others, as we serve the homeless in our community through Hospitality House. Every third Wednesday a group of Mountain Stream volunteers donate their time, effort and contributions to create a delicious dinner for homeless guests. This event is always enjoyable with a sense of joy, community and mutual well-being. It feels like a small effort to bring nourishment and happiness to others.

Every organization that prepares meals for Hospitality House does it their own way. At Mountain Stream, a group of people meets and decides the menus. A lead person volunteers for each month and does the calling to get volunteers to bring the food and to work the evening of the dinner.

We are so fortunate to be welcomed into the Peace Lutheran Church kitchen and dining hall to present this dinner. It is a lovely space and our guests always seem happy to be there and to enjoy the meals we prepare for them. We all benefit from this beautiful opportunity to come together and share our lives.

Hospitality House is a non-profit program in Nevada County serving the homeless. It works in collaboration with local faith based and service organizations. It is currently a "nomadic homeless shelter" but is soon to have a



"Chip"  
Photo by  
Stacy Mora

permanent location on Sutton Way in Grass Valley. Even when it becomes a single location, community organizations will continue to prepare the evening meals for the guests.

We welcome everyone to

participate with us in this service; you can participate as often or as seldom as you wish.

Please feel free to email K.C. Covert  
KCCovert@mtstream.org  
or call 530-913-6442  
for more information.



"The more we care for the happiness of others, the greater is our own sense of well being."



-His Holiness the Dalai Lama



## An Evening with Phillip Moffitt



Friday, August 3, 2012  
Esterly Hall  
336 Crown Point Circle  
Grass Valley, CA

Time: 7 - 9 pm.

Title: Emotional Chaos to Clarity:  
The Power of Mindfulness and  
Intention to Support Skillful Living

Do you sometimes feel that you're unable to cope with difficulty when it arises? Does emotional chaos get in the way of making good decisions and acting wisely?

If so, you're not alone. Most people have one or more areas of their lives that are impacted by the emotional chaos of reactive mind. Imagine feeling a sense of well-being every day regardless of whether life is pleasant or difficult.

This is possible when we learn to apply mindfulness and intention to our daily experience. Through cultivating responsive mind, we free ourselves from the turmoil that emotional chaos causes.

In this evening program based on his book *Emotional Chaos to Clarity*, Phillip Moffitt will lead an exploration of Buddhist teachings and practices that can help you develop a set of life skills—such as

setting priorities and identifying core values—that can profoundly improve your ability to respond to any difficult life situation.

At the peak of his career as CEO and Editor-in-chief of *Esquire Magazine*, Phillip Moffitt traded in his worldly aspirations to explore the inner life. He subsequently founded the Life Balance Institute in Northern California a non-profit organization devoted to providing training and resources for individuals and executives in how to live a more satisfying, values-based life.

Phillip teaches vipassana meditation at retreat centers throughout the United States, leads a weekly meditation class in Marin County, and is Co-Guiding Teacher at Spirit Rock Meditation Center.

He is the author of *Dancing with Life: Buddhist Insights for Finding Meaning and Joy in Everyday Life*. His new book, *Emotional Chaos to Clarity: How to Live More Skillfully, Make Better Decisions, and Find Purpose in Life*, will be published in May of 2012.

For more information contact Naima—[benefit@mtstream.org](mailto:benefit@mtstream.org).



## This is Bruce's Brain. This is a Silent Retreat. This is Bruce's Brain on a Silent Retreat.

by Bruce Kristal - San Francisco (Previous long-time member of Nevada City Sangha)

One afternoon I spied a sign in the Padmasambhava Peace Institute workshop that said "SIGN IN OFFICE."

I thought, "Who are they trying to tell that the sign is in the office and why are they trying to tell somebody that the sign is in the office?"

Then I thought "No, that doesn't make sense. Maybe this is the office where you sign in for something."

"No, that doesn't make sense either because there is an arrow pointing that way."

So maybe they are trying to tell me that the sign in office is over that way, but if that's the case why are they putting the sign in office sign in the shop where nobody can see it?

I know, maybe they are supposed to put the sign in office sign in the office for people to sign in in the office.

And suddenly I thought, "No, that's not it. It's telling me, although I don't know why, that the sign is in the office."

"Well, then if the sign is in the office, this must not be a sign at all. It's a fabrication, a clinging skandha, an intention. It's simply a product of my mind and doesn't really exist at all."

Whew!

The End.



## Beginning Meditation



### Roseville

Feb 28th through Mar 27th  
5 consecutive Tuesdays  
5:30 to 7:00 PM  
Maeve/Mary Helen  
Roseville Library  
225 Taylor Street  
Contact 530-878-1332  
or 530-887-9400  
maeve@mtstream.org  
maryhelen@mtstream.org

### Nevada City/Grass Valley

Apr 3rd through May 1st  
5 consecutive Tuesdays  
7:30 to 9:00 PM  
Heather Sundberg  
assisted by Paul Steege  
Core Movement Center  
580 Searles Ave  
Nevada City  
Contact 530-292-3746  
registrar@mtstream.org



Mountain Stream  
Meditation Center

P.O. Box 1644  
Grass Valley, CA 95945-1644

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### **Mountain Stream Meditation Center**

is a nonprofit organization, a vipassana community of Buddhist meditation groups dedicated to open heart, open mind. Retreats are held in various locations from the Sacramento Valley to the Eastern Sierras. Local meditation retreats are small and intimate. They feature vipassana instruction, sitting/walking meditation, group or individual meetings with the teacher, opening and closing circles, vegetarian fare, and dharma talks.

### **John M. Travis**

has been teaching meditation since 1986. He studied in Asia with senior teachers of both Theravada and Tibetan traditions and completed a four-year teacher training with Jack Kornfield. He is the founding teacher of Mountain Stream Meditation Center in Nevada City, California, and a teacher for Spirit Rock Center, a Buddhist retreat and training center in Marin County. John has a private practice as a meditation counselor and has trained in Hakomi body-centered therapy. For appointments call (530) 263-4096.

### **Insight Meditation**

is a simple and accessible vehicle for opening the heart, clearing the mind, and living in a peaceful and free way. It is based on a 2,500 year-old Buddhist practice which trains a clear awareness of breath and body, heart and mind, and the universal laws which govern our lives.

### **Donation and Fees**

are given freely, because the Buddhist teachings are priceless. There is never any charge for teachings. Registration fees for Mountain Stream events cover space rentals, transportation, food and other Mountain Stream expenses. None of this money goes directly to the teachers or staff. Classes and daylongs are also held on a donation basis. To allow teachers and staff to continue their Dharma work, support from the students is needed. There will be an opportunity to contribute at the end of each retreat, class, daylong and event. Mountain Stream requests your generous donation to support our endeavors. We wish to make clear that no one is ever turned away for inability to pay our fees. Please speak to the contact person if you cannot pay for all or part of an event and arrangements will be made.