



**Love me and you will know me;
but I am such a Reality that it is
extremely difficult to know me.**

The price is love.

**No repetition of God's name,
no penance and no meditation is
necessary — only love, and such a love
that it annihilates your ego.**

**This means your love should be
so deep that it makes you forget
yourself and the world.**

**This experience will leave you
desireless, dazed and confounded.**

This is real love.

Avatar Meher Baba
Lord Meher, Volume 4, page 1293



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Dear Reader

In this month's newsletter we present two articles. When Duncan Knowles visited Sacramento in April last year, we asked for a volunteer to send us an account of the meeting. Marie Rhodes stepped forward. And on January 2nd, this year, Scott and Ann Makeig visited and brought us a double-header meeting. The account follows. The poem this month is by Alice Klein, our neighbor who lives in Albany.

On Saturday, February 12, from 11AM to 5PM, the Make-a-Valentine event will take place at the El Cerrito Center on Stockton Ave. This is a fun, creative event for all ages. We offer this in conjunction with our neighbor, Jenny K.'s gift shop's annual event, and it is open to the public. We provide art material for the Valentine cards. We usually get a nice crowd of locals and kids. It's nice to have some Baba-lovers in attendance, as people always have questions about 'the Man in the wall pictures'.

If you wish to perform for Baba's birthday celebration, Ron Greenstein is coordinating the entertainment for this event. You can contact him at: performs@mindspring.com.

-Ben Leet

This newsletter (and past issues) will eventually be available in pdf form on the [center website](#), above.

Our Web Genie!

Check out the newly updated website Thanks to Jeanne Mojé MacDonald (link on sidebar).

Newsletterwallas: Ben Leet, Lisa Greenstein Cherri Nelson

Duncan Knowles in Sacramento

by Marie Rhodes

April 2010

Dear Ben,

I got a note from Marilyn Buehler asking me to write something for the newsletter about the meeting we had with Duncan Knowles. I had thought we would enjoy a meeting in Sacramento centered on the 3-D pictures of Meher Baba and photos of Baba, Charmian, and others that Duncan Knowles had presented on another occasion. I decided to contact Duncan Knowles to use some of the pictures he showed. I loved those pictures very much because they really touched my heart. I needed his input. Due to my memory being so bad, I couldn't even remember the name of the little machine he brought and share with us at the time. I am still in awe of having found myself right inside that little 3-D picture box with Baba.

So I contacted Duncan about the idea and, to my surprise, he volunteered to come to Sacramento. He said he'd bring a video projector to show images of Baba and a video of Charmian. We arranged a date on a Monday night and sent out a notice. We were, however, worried that maybe no one would show up as no one had responded that they would. People tend to have so many excuses as to why they don't come to a meeting. I related my concern to Duncan, who said not to worry. He agreed to come even if it were just Marilyn and I. So I was delighted to see as many people as did show up. They took time from their busy lives on a Monday night to come. The ones I talked to were so glad they had.

From my own perception, the meaningful part of the evening began for me at dinner. Duncan came with his wife and daughter, who were delightful to be with and to talk to. The conversation had to do with our lives, the struggles people have been having—such as long term care of dying husbands, an aging parent who is suffering and wants to die, jobs where loss of income had caused major upsets in their lives, and so on. I loved watching the interaction of both Duncan and his wife with Mary, who is his daughter from his marriage with Charmian Duce Knowles, and her devotion and love for her dad. Duncan's talk was wonderful, but even more wonderful for me was the caring love I saw in this

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Duncan Knowles in Sacramento (cont.)

by Marie Rhodes

family for each other. As love for me is what it is all about, Baba's love in our lives and how that has played out over the years is what matters most.

During Duncan's talk, what I got from the video presentation and letters between Charmian and Baba (correspondence between them between 1948 and 1968) was a story of a very beautiful woman, Charmian, who had everything the outside illusionary world could give. She had hopes and dreams for her life, as we all have. Being so close to Baba, you might think that maybe she had it easier than the rest of us, as she received gifts from Kings, traveled the world, had romance and marriage. She was also very close to Baba and those around him. None of this, however, prevented her from hardship, and from the physical and mental pain she had go through. Her dreams for a happy life did not materialize as she thought they would.

At the end of Charmian's life she did realize something very, very insightful, which wasthe most important thing I learned from Duncan's talk. She learned that her wants and her dreams were meaningless. That Baba had not given her what she had wanted but what she needed for the demise of her ego. It helped her penetrate the illusion and know a deeper reality of God. Suffering and pain does that in a way that nothing else can. And so how is Baba treating all of us these days? Pretty much the same way. Giving us what we need to rid ourselves of our ever-present ego.

This talk helped me look at myself, at my own ego, to be grateful, not just for the LOVE and all the beauty that Baba has shown me, but for the pain and suffering too. The dark side is the shadow which makes the light ever more bright. I felt deeply grateful for the opportunity to look at my own pain and suffering and see it differently.

This meeting was important one for me as I joined with others who love Baba. I saw their physical form, but I also got to know them more deeply. I got to know more about them and how Baba has been working in their lives. I enjoyed myself so much, having had such a good time. I can't thank Duncan and his family enough for their willingness to come to Sacramento for just a few of us.

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INsights

Community Newsletter

Duncan Knowles in Sacramento (cont.)

by Marie Rhodes

Lastly, I would like to mention that one photograph stands out in my mind most strongly, and I hope you have a chance one day to see it again. It is a picture of Mary and Mehera, which is absolutely fantastic, as well as another picture of Mary, her mother, and Duncan. There were so many other delightful pictures. Duncan's talk and pictures gave me a deeper understanding on how Baba works in all of our lives.

Thank you Marilyn Buehler for your efforts to keep Baba meetings happening in Sacramento. Without your efforts and hard work, this would not have happened. Thank you to all of those who took



time to come to this meeting. It was wonderful to be with you and to share your life in Baba.

Sending lots of BABA LOVE,
Marie Rhodes

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Scott & Ann Makeig's Visit

by Ben Leet

On a stormy weekend last January 2, Scott and Ann Makeig from San Diego visited our group for two interesting and entertaining meetings. Ann hosted a seminar and workshop on Non-violent Communication, and Scott performed a concert from a repertoire that dates from 1969 to the present. The local electrical power had been knocked out at the El Cerrito Center, so the workshop relocated at the Greensteins' house. The concert reconvened at the Center when the power returned.

Ann handed workshop participants a worksheet that included, in part, the following message:

"What is Nonviolent Communication (NVC)? NVC contains nothing new. It is based on the historical principles of non-violence--the natural state of compassion when no violence is present in the heart. NVC reminds us of what we already instinctively know about how good it feels to authentically connect to another human being heart to heart."

With NVC we learn to hear our own deeper needs and those of others. Through its emphasis on deep listening, to ourselves as well as others, NVC helps us discover the depth of our own compassion. This language reveals the awareness that all human beings are only trying to honor their universal values and needs every minute of every day.

NVC can be seen as both a spiritual practice that helps reveal and see our common humanity, using our power in a way that meets and honors everyone's needs, and a concrete set of skills which help us create life-serving families and communities. The form is simple, yet powerfully transformative."

The exercises we did involved introspection and then sharing with a partner or in a small group. After participating and sharing, I noticed that a small portion of my inner content was released from its solitude to be exposed in a caring, non-judgmental setting. Sharing with another man whom I know well, I found we were revealing aspects that we do not normally talk about. To many women, I suppose, this is not surprising.

More meetings using this methodology may be presented, as certain group members have expressed interest and, for the last

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Scott & Ann Makeig's Visit (cont.)

by Ben Leet

year, have been participating in the Non-violent Communication techniques. The group's library has a copy of the book *Nonviolent Communication, A Language of Life*, by Marshall Rosenberg, PhD. Learn more at www.cnvc.org/ and [www.baynvc.org.](http://www.baynvc.org/)

Back at the Center, Scott sang a lengthy set of his own songs in a two-hour concert. The earliest song was composed in 1969

with the last song composed in November 2010 in Myrtle Beach. One piece he performed was composed in 1675, ten years before Bach, Handel, and Vivaldi were born. It was the musical equivalent of the Shroud of Turin, and it sounded like it might have been performed around



Scottish highland campfires well before the Roman invaders set foot on the English island.

In his notes to the concert, Scott writes about his song "Gate Chelo", "I well remember singing this in Berkeley Baba meetings in 1969-1970, once when Adi [K. Irani] and Meherji first visited." "Gate Chelo" is a rousing sing-a-long that tends to raise the roof beams. In all he sang and performed 39 songs, ably assisted with graceful solos and accompaniment by Ron Greenstein on guitar and vocals, and Gaye Dunn on cello and vocals. Scott sang, played violin, guitar, and the harmonium.

"The white horse roams free in the moonlight" is the memorable lyric of one of his songs. From Scott's notes, the song was "written for Mehera's birthday in 1970." "I learned that the Mandali women would visit the Samadhi for the birthday occasion, wrote the song that morning, and sang it (accompanying himself on the harmonium) to Mehera in the Samadhi..." She said, "But

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Scott & Ann Makeig's Visit (cont.)

by Ben Leet

Baba is still riding the white horse--He is the king of the three worlds!" And when she came out of the tomb she said, "Baba said that he will share one pinpoint of His suffering with his lovers. So if that time comes, we must remember Baba and hold onto Him!"

We experienced a rare treat that weekend. Our thanks go out to the Makeigs, to Louise Barrie for inviting the Makeigs, and those who braved the rainy, gusty weather and helped out in many ways.

Mehera's Day

by Karen Talbot

The morning was chilly. When I arrived at the Samadhi in the early morning, it was already decorated with a light apricot covering and scads of bright red roses. Mehera's tomb-shrine had not been covered yet. Janet Judson invited many women to help place the covering and flowers on Mehera's tomb-shrine. One of the coverings was purple and gold. Janet later told me that those were the colors of the saris that Mehera would wear on her birthday. Next, very beautiful flower garlands were placed on her tomb-shrine.

When morning Arti was completed, "Happy Birthday" was sung in English, Gujarati, Spanish, and Farsi. All the songs and poems read after arti were in devotion to Mehera. Debbie Nordeen sang the final song "To The Glory of Love" which Mani had written in memory of dear Mehera.

At 10:15 there was a gathering at the Samadhi for Mehera's Birthday. I waited with Sheila Kyrinski, Billy Ward, Sally Pearson, and others for the car bringing Meheru and others to arrive. The car included Kacy, Davana, and Heather. Dolly, Janet, Amrit, and Meredith joined them when they first went into the East Room bringing flowers. We stayed outside. When they came back outside, we followed them to the Samadhi. They went inside and began singing the "Gujerati Arti". After a prayer, they placed flowers on His tomb, and then went to sit outside. We all said the prayers, sang "Happy Birthday" to Mehera in English and Gujarati, and more singing followed. Cindy Lowe sang a lovely song.

When the musical program was over, Meheru and the others went to Mehera's tomb-shrine where they placed several garlands and
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INsights

Community Newsletter

Mehera's Day (cont.)

by Karen Talbot

many flowers. Next they went to Mani's tomb-shrine and placed a garland. Afterwards they went to Baba's cabin and Baba's gadi where more garlands and flowers were placed. Before they left to return to Meherazad, they visited the East Room again. And then they were off. We all waved goodbye and shouted Avatar Meher Baba Ki Jai!

That afternoon there was a program in Hostel A. There were slides of "Mehera and Meher", songs were sung, poetry read, stories told, and the DVD Happy Birthday Darling Meher, lovingly directed by Kacy Cook, was shown. Everyone enjoyed a day filled with loving memories of dear Mehera.

Barry Beckett

by Ben Leet



Our good friend Barry Beckett died this month. His loving and energetic presence will be missed. We will miss his home-grown tomatoes, his CD gifts abundantly dispensed, and his exuberant bonhomie sense of humor. He became

a part of our lives, attending our meetings in the Sacramento area where he had lived for decades. Barry had previously sent his long memoir about his trip to India in 1969 for the Last Darshan to our newsletter in June 2009. His daughter Kathryn cared for him in his last months as his health failed. This past weekend the entire Sacramento contingent of Baba Lovers visited the Talbots' house for the Urban Sahavas with Jeff Wolverton and Nan Wicker where an informal memorial for Barry took place. In our next newsletter we hope to bring additional remembrances.

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Poetry

Mehera

by Alice Klein

The way she looks at him
in that old photograph
you can feel intentness
such as you do not meet in this world.

Everything in her is leaning
in his direction, yet she is steady and still.

Her soul is making a beeline
through her eyes to the heart of him.

I cannot help but stare and wonder.

Her stillness makes me still.

Nothing at all moves in her
but Love, and Love is what holds her
and him and Everything.

So Love moves to Love,
so nothing moves at all.

Announcements

Center Library Note

Would you like to be a “patron”? We have a library for your reading pleasure and convenience. Our library is housed upstairs in a book case at the MBCNC Center on Stockton Street. We have had 14 borrowers over the past year. You may access a list of the holdings at the web page meherbabameherbaba.org; look for library, and open the book or video pdf files. When you visit the Center remember to check out the library books. We would also like donations. For a list of books we need, see the section at the end of the library holdings. Contact the Newsletter about donations.

The Trust

All who wish to share in the commitment laid down by Meher Baba through the Trust should contact Jack Mormon, ambkj@aol.com

Meher Baba Information

For introductory information about Avatar Meher Baba, e-mail info@MeherBabaInformation.org or write to:

P.O. Box 1101,
Berkeley, CA 94701
<http://MeherBabaInformation.org>

Meher Baba Center of Northern California

6923 Stockton Avenue
El Cerrito, California 94530
(510) 525-4779

Meher Baba Center of Northern CA website

Meeting schedules can be downloaded in pdf form from website (above).

The center is open for drop-in and book store most Saturdays 1 p.m.–4 p.m.
(check **website** for details)

Directions to our Center:

From Highway 80, Interstate 5, going north or south, in El Cerrito, take the Central Avenue exit. Exit east, toward the hills. Cross San Pablo Avenue. Go under the BART train tracks, and less than a block after the tracks, turn left on Richmond Avenue.

Announcements (cont.)

Head north on Richmond Avenue until Stockton Avenue (first stop light),
turn right on Stockton. About two blocks onward, the Center is located
on the left side of the street. Address on previous page.

More Local Meetings (Continued on next page)

More Local Meetings

Lafayette – Sunday Afternoons

Monthly meeting at the home of Kirk and Marlene Allen.
Please call to confirm. (925) 284-4066

Sacramento – Several Gatherings Each Month

Times and locations vary.

Contact Marilyn Buehler (916) 812-9496 info@premsay.com

Los Gatos – Sunday Evenings

At the home of Clint Snyder

Call (408) 395-6865

Sonoma County - Arti happens once a month,

Usually the first Sunday. Locations vary.