

## Short and Hopefully Sweet

By Alberta Weingart

Awakening the day after Rev. Teigan's yearly retreat at Pine Mountain Buddhist Temple, I still felt a little high (not in the usual sense) after a short meditation. My dog, Beppe, was demanding my attention, which I happily gave him. Then while I was opening the blinds in the various rooms, I came upon a plaque which I hadn't yet put up in my mother's room (though she died a year ago, I still call it my mother's room). I had seen that plaque many times in my parents' home in Ohio. It was a gift to my parents from my Aunt Mathilde on one of our trips to visit my father's relatives in Germany. It reads, "*Ein liebes Wort am fruhen Morgen erfreut das Herz den ganzen Tag.*" The English translation is: "*A loving word in the early morning gladdens the heart the entire day.*" For some reason it made me stop and think about how profound that saying really is. And perhaps when the "the high" of the retreat wears off by the distractions of my busy lay life and I put the plaque up in her room I will stop and think about it and not just go by and say "Oh, that's nice."

A few minutes later my dog was reminding me that it was time to take him for a walk. After walking several blocks we encountered two workers fixing something in the road. As I stopped to talk and pet a neighbor's beautiful big St. Bernard puppy, one of the workers smiled and said, "Sure is a big dog." I responded "yes" and then asked him what he was doing. He smiled and proudly said that he just got the list of needed patches to be done on the water lines. He explained the stages he was going to do to complete his job, and then said that the last thing he would do is to make sure the tar he put on top was smooth so it would not be bumpy to drive on. I thought about the encounter and how that made me feel and how good he must have felt to tell someone about the work he was doing to improve the road and the lives of the people who drive on it. Then I thought about the plaque and its meaning. And yes, there is some benefit to meditating early in the morning and saying a loving word, although at the time we may not see it until later on in the day or our lives. Then what is left when we sit is trust that we will see some benefit – if that's what we're looking for.

This wasn't as short as I thought it would be when I started writing, but I hope it was sweet!