

# Mid America Dharma News

Winter issue

Mid America Dharma Group

January, 1997

## MADG on the World Wide Web

It's 11:30 at night. You're talking to a friend several states away about your plans to attend the latest MADG retreat. Your friend expresses an interest in signing up for the retreat. Great! But now just what *did* you do with that latest retreat flier? And how can you give your friend directions to Conception Abbey that will be easy to follow?

If you have access to the Internet, you can find the answers to those questions and many more at the Mid-America Dharma Group web site: <<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/3712>>. The web site offers up-to-date information on practice (sitting) groups, retreats, special MADG-sponsored activities and the newsletter.

The MADG website will also let you link to other web sites that have information on insight and metta meditation and Theravada Buddhism. It has, as well, information on Conception Abbey and a link to a web site that will plot directions from your (and your friend's) home to the Abbey.

If you would like to have your practice group listed or to suggest other ideas for the web site, please contact Phil Jones, 200 E. Parkway, Columbia, MO 65203 by mail; 573•874•0881 by phone; or [pjones01@mail.coin.missouri.edu](mailto:pjones01@mail.coin.missouri.edu) by e-mail.

## MADG Board Elects New Officers

The Board of the Mid America Dharma Group bid a fond farewell in early January to outgoing president Greg Zuendel. Over the past two years Greg helped to give board meetings focus and order and more. He gave his time and energy as registrar or retreat manager to nearly every retreat over the same period of time. He just always seemed to be there, giving. Thanks, Greg.

The Board then elected a new slate of officers. Contact any of these folks if you have comments or questions:

President: Ginny Morgan (Columbia, MO),  
573•875•8473

Vice-president: Mary Lou Hathaway (KCMO),  
816•941•7232

Secretary: Marnie Hammer (Kansas City, MO),  
816•523•5061

Treasurer: John van Keppel (Leawood, KS),  
913•685•3430

## Got Something for the Newsletter?

If you have an announcement you would like published in this newsletter, please send it via the mail to the new editor of *Mid America Dharma News*, David Arehart, at 2540 Iowa, Ste J, Lawrence, KS 66046; or fax it to 913•832•0103.

## RETREAT UPDATE: Mary Orr and Gil Fronsdal To Return

Mary Orr returns to the Heartland to lead two retreats in mid-March: a nonresidential retreat in Des Moines from Friday evening, March 14, to through Sunday noon, March 16. Mary then flies to Kansas City to begin a week-long householder retreat from Sunday evening, March 16, through Saturday, March 22. Retreatants will meet evenings except for Saturday, when they will meet from 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. To qualify for the householder retreat, applicants must have sat at least one three-day retreat and be willing to miss no more than one meeting.

The householder retreat may fill quickly. No more than thirty-five to forty students will be accepted. Your deposit (and not a phone call) is what will guarantee your spot in this retreat, as well as in all MADG retreats through Shinzen Young's retreat in July.

Send your deposits and your written requests for deferred payment to the treasurer, John van Keppel, 13741 Pembroke Circle, Leawood, KS 66224. See the enclosed retreat fliers for more specific information on the retreats and how to register.

In April Gil Fronsdal comes for what is becoming an annual spring event: a long weekend retreat at Conception Abbey. This year Gil will be accompanied by Tara Brach, another experienced meditation teacher from the Bay Area. Dates for the retreat are April 3 - 6. We look forward to the visits of all three of these wonderful teachers of the Dhamma.

## 1997 Retreat Schedule

The following is a list of retreats have been scheduled for 1997. The dates for retreats scheduled with Eugene Cash and Shinzen are close to firm, but retreat brochures with firm dates will be mailed to you about ten weeks prior to the actual dates. This listing may assist you in planning your 1997 schedule.

- Mary Orr (Des Moines)\* March 14-16  
(Kansas City)\* March 16-22
- Gil Fronsdal and Tara Brach (Conception Abbey)  
April 3-6
- Eugene Cash and Debra Chamberlin-Taylor (Conception Abbey) May 22-26
- Shinzen Young (Conception Abbey) July 18-22
- Ten-day retreat (Conception Abbey), teacher TBD, Oct or Nov
- Monthly day-long retreats (Unity Temple on the Plaza)\* Feb 8, Mar 8, Apr 12. Contact Robert Brumet (816•353•6479) or Ben Worth (816•358•8353) (\*Non-residential)

## Beginning Insight Meditation Classes

**DATES:** 2-6-97 7:30-9: p.m.  
2-13-97

3-6-97 7:30-9: p.m.  
3-13-97

**PLACE:** Unity Temple on the Plaza,  
Kansas City, MO

**TEACHER:** John Flaherty  
(816•523•5061)

**WHAT:** Two classes on successive Thursdays for introductory meditation instruction and practice. Practice will be put in the context of Buddhism, purposes and benefits of meditation, how to establish a daily practice, retreats, etc.

## Oldtimers' Alert: Remembering Way Back When

John van Keppel continues to gather information on the early days of MADG, at Bo Sheaffer's house in Topeka, and even earlier, if someone can recall an "even earlier" time when folks met to study and practice Vipassana meditation. Contact John at 913•685•3430 with your recollections.

*Q: What is the Way and how must it be followed?*

*A: What sort of thing do you suppose the Way to be, that you should wish to follow it?*

*Q: Should we not seek for anything at all?*

*A: By conceding this, you would save yourself a lot of mental effort.*

*Q: But in this way everything would be eliminated. There cannot just be nothing.*

*A: Who called it nothing? Who told you to eliminate anything? Look at the void in front of your eyes. How can you produce it or eliminate it?*

P'ei Hsui in dialogue with Huang Po

## Sangha Leaders Workshop

You've attended a number of retreats and feel committed to your practice. So you started a practice group in you own community. But now it's getting difficult. People show up to meditate who don't know how. Other people drift in and out, making it hard to maintain a feeling of connection, intimacy and focus in the group.

To respond to these and similar concerns, Mid America Dharma Group is planning a workshop for "sangha leaders." Just what is a "sangha leader"? It could be someone who has taken on a leadership position in fostering the Dhamma in their own community, or someone who leads a practice group, provides beginning instruction in insight meditation, facilitates a kalyanna-mitta group or coordinates a retreat. It could even be someone who wants to take on a leadership role but is not sure where to begin.

This workshop idea is in the preliminary planning stage. A questionnaire will soon be mailed to current sangha leaders asking about their needs, interests and strengths. If you are interested in this project and would like to receive a questionnaire, please contact Phil Jones, 200 E. Parkway, Columbia, MO 65203 by mail; 573•874•0881 by phone; or by e-mail at [pjones01@mail.coin.missouri.edu](mailto:pjones01@mail.coin.missouri.edu).

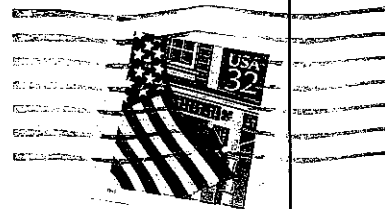
## Celebrate the Tibetan New Year

Come celebrate the Tibetan New Year at the fifth Tibetan New Year Banquet on Saturday, February 1, in Newton, Kansas. The annual banquet is in connection with the Tibetan Education Project, started in 1992 by MADG member Bill Hale for the purposes of raising funds to support education, in India, of Tibetan refugees and to raise the level of awareness in the Midwest about Tibet and the dilemma of her people.

By helping to make education possible for Tibetan students, the project promotes self-sufficiency among refugees which, in turn, helps preserve Tibetan culture. Ten children and college students, including one young monk-in-training, currently receive assistance.

For information about the banquet or the Tibetan Education Project, call Bill Hale at 913•542•3536, late evenings.

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