



Mid America Dharma News

Winter Issue

Mid America Dharma
<http://www.midamericadharm.org/>

November 2000

2000-01 Retreat Schedule

- Dec 28-Jan 2:* Residential with Santikaro Bhikkhu
Conception, MO
- Feb 16-19:* Residential with Rodney Smith
Conception, MO
- March 3-5:* Non-Residential Metta Retreat with
Myoshin Kelley, Kansas City, MO.
- June 16-23:* Residential with Guy Armstrong, Franz Mockl
and Carol Wilson, St. Louis, MO.
- Aug 30-Sep 3:* Residential with Eugene Cash
Conception, MO
- Oct 5-7:* Non-Residential with Matthew Flickstein &
Ginny Morgan, Kansas City, MO.
- Nov 12-20:* Residential Old Yogi Retreat with Bhante
Gunaratana, Conception, MO

Contact Information:

For registration information on the upcoming 2000-2001 retreats, see registration info on page 3 and 4.

Retreat Center Vision Meeting In Columbia, MO

On October 14 a group of people met to begin the process of visioning a Midwest Retreat Center in the Vipassana tradition. Twenty five people from all over the Central Midwest region attended the meeting which was held in Columbia, Missouri. People were asked to respond in council style to two questions: "What is your idea of a retreat center?" and "What would you be willing to do to help?" The answers to the first question began to form the tapestry of a vision that we had hoped for. Among the features that this group considered important in a retreat center were: accessibility, solitude, aesthetics, types of programs including family/children's programs, low maintenance, ongoing staffing, potential for self retreats and a residential community. Each member present vowed to support the vision by volunteering to help in the areas in which they have expertise. Among these skills were architectural work, fundraising, office or program organization and manual labor.

A core group of participants agreed to serve on a committee to begin the process of setting land criteria. Members of this committee represented many different areas of the Midwest.

When we began the meeting, we asked people to introduce themselves and to state their intentions. I was struck by the fact each person expressed gratefulness for the Dharma and to MAD for bringing the opportunity for deepening the practice of freedom into their lives. They stated that they were there to serve two efforts: give to MAD and to make possible for others the opportunity of this practice in a manner that will affect not only us but our children and our children's children as well. This

gift that keeps on giving was the common vision held by us all.

We invite you to help. In this 'Season of Giving' we invite you to send a donation to Mid America Dharma's Land Acquisition Fund. For this to work we all need to share our resources generously. Personally, I plan to continue making regular contributions, both with my time and efforts, but also with my personal finances. If a number of us make similar commitments there is no doubt that this vision will materialize. The simple commitment of giving to the extent that we are able will bring the Dharma to a home we can all share.

— Ginny Morgan, President of the Board

Kansas City & St. Louis Vision Meetings Planned

Similar retreat center vision meetings are planned for both the Kansas City area on December 16 and the St. Louis area TBA. If you are interested in attending a meeting to share your ideas and skills please contact John Flaherty in Kansas City at 816 523-5061 or Elizabeth Fryer in St. Louis at 636 230-2388.

History of Mid America Dharma

Mid America Dharma grew out of Vipassana retreats that were led by Shinzen Young at Bo and Doug Shaefor's house in Topeka, Kansas from 1983 through 1989. Shinzen first came to the Menninger Foundation in Topeka in 1982 at the invitation of Elmer and Alice Green, who were conducting psychological and scientific studies of the meditative state and biofeedback experience. Genuine interest in meditation was sparked by Shinzen's visit and he responded by returning to the Topeka/Kansas City area many times over the next 16 years to lead meditation retreats.

In 1989, the group made the transition from Bo and Doug's house to the Franciscan Prayer Center in Independence, Missouri. A retreat flyer mailing list was developed which extended the opportunity for attending meditation retreats to a wider community throughout the Midwest. A few retreatants offered to assist

continued on page 2

Yes, I want to help build a dream. Please accept my donation of:

\$1000 \$500 \$100 \$50 \$25

\$15 OTHER

I can't give financially right now but want to help.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____ E-mail _____

Send To: Mid America Dharma
200 E. Parkway
Columbia, MO 65203

*Mid America Dharma is a tax-deductible 501(c)3 organization.

History -cont.

with hosting the retreats. This turned out to be the first group that began to plan and host retreats. The group sponsoring retreats began calling itself the Mid America Dharma Group. In 1993 the first newsletter was published and sent out to about 400 people. As interest in meditation retreats increased, more retreats were held and the newsletter was sent out on a regular basis. In 1994 a formal steering committee was formed to organize retreats and discuss policy issues. In Aug., 1996 Mid America Dharma was finally incorporated. We received 501 (c) (3) nonprofit status in Dec., 1997.

In the mid 90's MAD began to make an effort to serve the wider Midwest region, hosting nonresidential and residential retreats in Des Moines, Iowa, Columbia and St. Louis, Missouri and Oklahoma City, Oklahoma and supporting the development of "grassroots" teachers in the Midwest. We have cosponsored two teacher training workshops with The Forest Way Insight Meditation Center and supported several sangha members who have participated in the Spirit Rock Community Dharma Leaders Program. Also part of this regional outreach was to host a Sangha Leaders meeting; inviting group leaders from throughout the Midwest to come together to share ideas, concerns and visions of spreading Dharma in this area.

Mid America Dharma continues to support the effort of offering Insight Meditation to as many people as interested. As our regional sangha continues to grow we offer more and more opportunities. Our current vision of a Midwest Meditation Retreat Center is the next evolution in supporting our sanghas continued deepening practice of the Dharma.

The Scholarship Committee

In keeping with the spirit and practice of dana (generosity), Mid America Dharma extends financial assistance to people who would otherwise be unable to attend a retreat because of limited financial resources. Such financial assistance is available through a deferred payment plan and/or a scholarship for up to one half of the retreat registration cost.

The Scholarship Committee is comprised of three board members: Marnie Hammer, Ginny Morgan and Bob Mikesic (Chairperson). Applications for a deferred payment plan and/or a scholarship are available from the Scholarship Committee Chairperson, the Retreat Registrar or our web site <<http://www.midamericadharmadharma.org/scholarships.html>>.

"Financial Assistance Guidelines" are sent to retreatants with deferred payment and scholarship application forms. The guidelines explain deferred payment plan and scholarship options, and the priorities that guide the decisions of the Scholarship Committee. Completed applications for scholarships and deferred payment plans are sent to the Chairperson, who contacts committee members for a group decision. The Chairperson is also responsible for receiving deferred payments, and producing a scholarship report after each retreat that summarizes scholarships and deferred payment plans given, dana given to the scholarship fund, and the current balance in the fund. For more information or to apply, please contact Bob Mikesic at bmikesic@webserf.net or 785 749-7249.

Sangha News

Show Me Dharma, Columbia, MO is having a busy Fall schedule. In addition to our regular Wednesday night sittings, we are offering two Days of Mindfulness, one led by Phil Jones and one by Ginny Morgan. Phil will also be offering a six week introductory course and Ginny will be offering an eight week course on the Four Foundations of Mindfulness. The sangha will be having a pot luck dinner in October. The Kalyana Mitta group is finishing reading and discussing Sharon Salzberg's *Lovingkindness*. Our library committee, led by Tonda March, has also established a lending book library to complement our tape library. For more information call Ginny at 573 817-9942 or e-mail her at <gmorgan@coin.org>.

The Main Street Sangha (formerly The Sunflower Sangha) meets on Tuesday evenings from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. at 9305 Main in Kansas City, MO. Sitting is the main emphasis and shared leadership is passed to members willing to undertake the role. Would be joiners call Millie Zimmerman at 816 363-5279.

St. Louis Insight Meditation Group meets at the Big Bend Yoga Center, 88 N. Gore in Webster Groves every Sunday from 7-9 p.m. We will be hosting a month long class from Feb 9-March 9 taught by Santikaro Bhikkhu (see retreat bio) on Dependant Origination followed by a weekend retreat. For information or to register call 636 230-2388 or www.insightstlouis.org

Lotus Meditation Center in Grand Forks, ND will host two nonresidential retreats in 2001. March 16-18 with Myoshin Kelley and November 16-18 with Matthew Flickstein. For more information please contact Marilyn Wilkens at 701 777-6438 from 8a.m.-5p.m. Scholarships available.

Prairie Sangha for Mindfulness Meditation:

Monday Night Sitting Group, class and discussion 6:45 -7:15 gathering time; 7:15 - 9:30 practice, class or discussion. 3307 S. Pine Circle, Urbana, IL. If you do not sit regularly check with Sandra for any schedule changes: <hammond@soltec.net>. Days of Mindfulness: 3307 S. Pine Cir, Urbana, IL (details announced via e-mail).

Thursday Night Sitting Group 7 - 9 p.m., weekly 216 Pennsylvania Ave, Urbana, IL. If you do not sit regularly check with Barbara Poss for any schedule changes: <byoungposs@yahoo.com>.

Dharma Class/Discussions: 253 East Delaware, 9A, Chicago 8 - 9:30 p.m. If you do not attend regularly check with Sandra for any changes: <hammond@soltec.net>.

Plank Trail Sangha: 3624 W. 216th Street, Matteson, IL. If you do not sit regularly check with Peg for any schedule changes: 708 481-4086

Insight Chicago: Scott Thompson's apt. 1258 W. Albion Ave., Apt 3-B, Chicago, Monday evenings. If you do not sit regularly, contact Scott at 773 764-0456 or <sthomp2@netzero.net>. Other groups are forming. To find out about them, contact Melanie at 773 451-0724 or <mastilli@uchicago.edu>.

Lafayette Sangha: Location and times vary. Meetings are usually during the 2nd and 4th weekends of the month. Please contact Rodney Ball at <rodneyball@juno.com> or call 765 423-2777.

Mid America Dharma Fall/Winter 2000-01 Retreat Schedule



Dec 28-Jan 2: Residential with Santikaro Bhikkhu, Conception, MO

The registrar for this retreat is: Cheryl Bunn, 19800 Jackson Road, Chanute, KS 66720, 316 431-7378. Registration closes and final payment is due on Dec. 14. Any registrations postmarked after Dec. 7 will be subject to a \$25 late charge. This retreat is open to both beginning and experienced students and will include instructions in the traditional anapanasati style of meditation.

Santikaro Bhikkhu is an American, born and raised in the Chicago area, who went to Thailand with the Peace Corps and subsequently ordained as a monk in 1985. He is the senior monk at Suan Atammayatma. For many years he has served as the English translator for Ajahn Buddhadasa. He is also the translator of Buddhadasa's *Mindfulness with Breathing* (Wisdom Publications, 1997) and the editor of Buddhadasa's *Heartwood of the Bodhi Tree* (Wisdom Publications, 1994.) For more information on anapanasati or more about Ajahn Buddhadasa please visit <<http://www.suanmokkh.org>>.



February 16 -19th Residential with Rodney Smith, Conception, MO

The registrar for this retreat is: Mary Lou Hathaway, 12315 Charlotte, Kansas City, MO 64146, 816 941-7232. Registration closes and final payment is due on Feb. 2. Any registration postmarked after Jan. 26 will be subject to a \$25 late charge. This retreat is open to both beginning and experienced students and will follow the usual vipassana retreat format.

Rodney Smith has been practicing vipassana meditation since the mid-70's and spent several years as a Buddhist monk in Asia. He has been teaching meditation since the early 80's and has worked as a full-time hospice worker since 1984. He is currently the guiding teacher for Insight Seattle. Rodney is the author of the popular *Lessons From The Dying* (Wisdom Publications, 1998).



March 3 - 5th Non-Residential Metta Retreat with Myoshin Kelley, Kansas City, MO

The registrar for this retreat is: John Flaherty, 455 E. 80th Terrace, Kansas City, MO 64131, 816 523-5061. Registration closes and final payment is due on Feb. 26. This retreat is open to both beginning and experienced students.

Myoshin Kelley has been practicing meditation since 1975. During this time she has practiced with a number of teachers in various traditions. Her teaching reflects a strong influence from Burmese meditation masters with an emphasis on simplicity and lovingkindness. She is an associate teacher at the Insight Meditation Society in Barre, MA, where she lives.

REGISTRATION FORM

If you are registering for more than one retreat please photocopy this form and send with payment to the listed registrar for each retreat.

_____ Dec 28-Jan 2: Residential with Santikaro Bhikkhu, Conception, MO, Cost: Only available as Single \$285.00 Minimum deposit of \$70. Cost after Dec. 7: \$310.00. To register return this form with check payable to: Mid America Dharma, c/o Cheryl Bunn, 19800 Jackson Road, Chanute, KS 66720

_____ Feb 16-19: Residential with Rodney Smith, Conception, MO. Only available as Single \$190.00 Minimum deposit of \$70. Cost after Jan. 26: \$215.00. To register please return this form with check payable to: Mid America Dharma, c/o Mary Lou Hathaway, 12315 Charlotte, Kansas City, MO 64146

_____ Mar 3-5: Non-Residential with Myoshin Kelley, Kansas City, MO. Cost is \$50.00 To register please return this form with check payable to: Mid America Dharma, c/o John Flaherty, 455 E. 80th Terrace, Kansas City, MO 64131

Please Print:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

If you have special needs, please contact the listed registrar.

For Residential Retreatants only:

Gender: F M Do you snore? Y N

Will you arrive after 8 p.m. on the first day? Y N

Is this your first insight meditation retreat? Y N

Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

Information on Mid America Dharma Retreats

INSIGHT MEDITATION offers an easily accessible way of freeing the mind from the distortions of self-centeredness, negativity and confusion. Through concentrated awareness, we can learn to see our experience as a constantly changing process, in which pleasure and pain, fear and joy, and all aspects of life are accepted with increasing balance and equanimity. This insight leads to an understanding of our true nature and the possibility of living each moment fully with compassion and genuine freedom. Insight Meditation requires no belief commitments and is compatible with religious affiliations. Unless specified by the retreat description, no previous meditation experience is required.

RETREAT FORMAT: Periods of sitting meditation will be alternated with walking meditation. *Retreats will be held in silence* with talking only during teaching periods. *Beginners must be present from the start of the retreat* to receive initial instructions.

Please bring a meditation cushion or bench and a soft mat for meditation. Standard chairs are available and may also be used.

Wear comfortable, loose fitting clothes. Please do not wear or bring strongly scented lotions, perfumes or incense.

Non-Residential Retreats will provide basic instruction in vipassana (insight) meditation. They are open to both beginning and experienced practitioners. Nonresidential retreats are an opportunity for beginners to experience more intensive practice. Due to the length and size of the retreats, there will not be scheduled individual interviews.

Residential Retreats begin with check-in at 4 p.m. on the first day and run through lunch on the last day. Participants will be guided through group or private interviews and daily general lectures.

Meals are plain vegetarian. A complimentary tea table will be available. Please be responsible for any special dietary needs. Meals are not provided for nonresidential retreats, unless indicated.

REGISTRATION: Information about retreat site, starting times and other details will be sent after you register.

Non-Residential Retreats: Please note that full payment is due at time of registration.

Residential Retreats: A minimum deposit of \$70 must accompany your registration. Full payment is due before the start of the retreat.

Registration Deadline: Registration deadlines are posted for each retreat on page 3. *Any registrations postmarked or received after the deadlines will be subject to a \$25 late charge.*

Retreat Costs: See the registration form on the previous page.

Refunds: No deposits will be refunded after the deadline. Please register as early as possible.

Scholarships: Inability to pay should not prevent you from attending, as there are scholarship funds set aside for this purpose. Deferred payment plans are also available. Contact the Registrar for a copy of the scholarship and deferred payment criteria. Written applications for scholarship must be received by the Registrar no later than three weeks prior to the retreat.

RETREAT REGISTRARS: Call with questions.

Dec 28-Jan 2 - Cheryl Bunn, 19800 Jackson Rd. Chanute, KS 66720 316 431-7378.

Feb 16-19 - Mary Lou Hathaway, 12315 Charlotte, Kansas City, MO 64146, 816 941-7232

Mar 3-5 - John Flaherty, 455 E. 80th Terrace, Kansas City, MO 64131, 816 523-5061

Dana (or generosity): These retreats are led by teachers who freely give the teachings without any payment. All retreat fees go for retreat expenses. It is central to this tradition that the students support the teacher with a donation. There is no expected amount, but you are encouraged to give to the extent you are able. Dana is totally voluntary.

address service requested

Kansas City, MO 64141-4411

P.O. Box 414411

Mid America Dharma

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