



## PASSION, COMPASSION AND DISPASSION

by Eugene Cash, reprinted from the  
September 2000-March 2001 issue of *Spirit Rock News*

"Whatever beings are born or will be born  
They will journey on, leaving the body.  
Knowing that everything one has must be abandoned  
A skillful one would ardently lead the holy life."  
— The Buddha

It has been my practice to periodically read certain texts and writings on the dharma each year. I find that specific texts reveal themselves to me in new ways as my practice and understanding deepens. A few years ago, while re-reading the *Satipatthana Sutta* (The Discourse on the Foundations of Mindfulness), I discovered a phrase previously overlooked. In this *sutta* the Buddha encourages us to contemplate the body, feelings, mind and mind objects. He says in doing this, we must be "...ardent, fully aware and mindful..."

Cultivating mindfulness and awareness were part of the teachings from the beginning of my practice. But I never heard or focused on the word *ardent* before. As I read the text this time, I started to explore the role and experience of ardency in practice. What does it *mean* to practice ardently?

Looking up *ardent* in the dictionary, I was excited to find these definitions:

1. Characterized by emotional warmth, and passion.
2. Strong enthusiasm and devotion.
3. Burning, on fire.

### Characterized by emotional warmth, and passion...

Ardency is first and foremost a quality of heart. Unification of mind and heart begins with complete acceptance of our experience. We can't be mindful and aware of that which we reject or deny. A non-judgmental awareness allows us to open to things as-they-are with compassion. Then compassion is not a far off goal but is woven into each moment. It becomes part of the fabric of mindfulness.

In the Dhammapada the Buddha describes this whole-hearted mindfulness: "Because we hold ourselves dear we maintain careful self-regard both day and night." This careful self-regard (fully caring) goes hand in hand with clear awareness of our experience.

Because peace and calm are highly valued in meditation and contemplative culture, students often believe that passion is somehow un-dharmic. Examining the lives of many great beings—Gandhi, Mother Teresa, Martin Luther King, His Holiness the Dalai Lama—we see the depth of their passion; their willingness to open fully to life and to life's suffering as an essential part of their path. Carl Jung put it this way: "The attainment of wholeness requires one to

stake one's whole being. Nothing less will do; there can be no easier conditions, no substitutes, no compromises."

The Buddha is someone who was passionate about practice and awakening. Before becoming the Buddha, he was a prince who "had it all"—status, money, family, position. And, he gave that all up in his passion to understand our human experience. He devoted himself to the most difficult practices and austerities of his time. He didn't stop when these practices failed to give the liberation he sought. He continued to practice ardently, with devotion, enthusiasm, and passion, until he realized freedom. He serves as an inspiration to all of us.

### Strong enthusiasm and devotion...

The enthusiastic aspect of ardency is most apparent when one first meets the Dharma. When I discovered meditation and the practice of mindfulness, I wanted to go on retreat as much as possible. At home I would sit as much as six times each day. This kind of enthusiasm is wonderful, bringing excitement, a sense of freshness and possibility. It's a little like falling in love, falling in love with the dharma. It has that first blush of passion. Similar to the honeymoon phase of a relationship, this kind of enthusiasm changes over time. As "falling in love" matures it begins to shift to "standing in love." A deepening sense of enthusiasm emerges.

Over the years of practice my initial sense of inspiration has quieted into a fuller sense of devotion. Now I experience my passion expanding into all areas of life. The line between formal and informal practice continues to evaporate. Instead of integrating the practice, I think of bringing my life into my practice. All of my life—no part left out.

Devotion is the expression of our ardency. As we continue to practice we begin to give ourselves fully to spiritual life. The artificial split between life and practice slowly dissolves. Our devotion becomes the recognition of the unity of life and spirituality. We begin to offer our practice *and our lives* for the benefit of all beings. We understand the words of Sucitto Bhikkhu, who said, "What sustains the spiritual life is that it becomes independent of one's own volition; it has a life of its own that one comes to recognize and serve."

In the Christian tradition this is expressed as, "Not my will but Thy will." I notice more and more my willingness to accept, open and become aware of whatever life presents me as a form of service. I serve my body, my family, my work, my community and the world as an offering arising naturally out of my devotion.

### Burning, on fire...

Some confusion about passion in practice arises from the emphasis on dispassion in Buddhist texts. In one fa-

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mous teaching, the Fire Sermon, the Buddha exhorts us to see that "All is burning... the eye is burning, the ear is burning, the nose, tongue, body, mind are burning. Burning with what? With greed, aversion and delusion.... One who sees this becomes dispassionate and being dispassionate becomes non-attached, with non-attachment one becomes liberated." This is a very powerful teaching, relating liberation with dispassion.

If one of the definitions of ardent is "burning, on fire," how does this relate to dispassion? When I think of someone who is burning, on fire, I think of an athlete like Michael Jordan. At the top of his game he is "on fire," excelling at his sport. He has awareness, concentration, and the ability to completely flow with experience. High-level athletes often talk about losing themselves and time in the passion of the game. After an intense, high pressure game, LA Lakers basketball star Kobe Bryant said he felt no pressure because he "forgot about himself." To become "extinguished" is one of the definitions of *nibbana*. This extinguishing is highly valued in the teachings. If one meaning of ardent is *to burn*, then how does this relate to the extinguishing of passion? Dispassion is *passionately* valued in our practice. We have a fire for letting go. The classical metaphor in spiritual literature is to be like a moth to the flame—burning to be extinguished.

The Buddha and his followers are passionate about one thing—awakening. This passion, this ardency, infuses their lives, their practice, their very Being. May it also infuse our lives.

*"Passion, Compassion and Dispassion"* was reprinted with permission of Eugene Cash.

Pages 3 and 4 of this issue of *GrassRoots Dhamma* describe the October, 2001 residential vipassana retreat with guiding teachers Eugene Cash and Mark Coleman.

### YOU'RE INVITED TO ATTEND THE NEXT TCVC BUSINESS MEETING, SEPTEMBER 18, 2001

If you've attended at least one TCVC-sponsored retreat (residential or non-residential), the TCVC coordinating committee members invite you to attend a business meeting. We socialize from 7 to 7:30 P.M. then conduct TCVC business from 7:30-9:00 P.M. We're eager to have your input and participation.

On Tuesday, September 18 we'll meet at Merra Young's home. The agenda will include planning the October, 2001 retreat and future retreats. To ask about the location and driving directions, leave a message for Merra at 952-253-5228.

### A NEW VOICE ON TCVC'S INFO LINE

If you dial TCVC's Info Line (651-229-3139), you'll hear a recording by Veronica Weadock who recently took over from Kay Wicker as Information Line Volunteer. Thank you Veronica and Kay! The recording lists upcoming

TCVC business meetings, retreats, and descriptions of TCVC and of vipassana meditation.

### SHARING YOUR TIME AND TALENT

People who assist at or manage TCVC retreats, or who do other tasks, are often motivated by generosity. Having received benefit by attending TCVC retreats or programs, people share their time and talent to benefit others.

For example, you could post a copy of the October, 2001 retreat's description (see pages 3 and 4) at your local library or health food store, or encourage a friend to attend. Your effort might benefit someone greatly.

Can you offer a periodic commitment of time? We have a burning need for someone to assume the role of TCVC Secretary (a member of the TCVC Coordinating Committee), contributing approximately six hours every six or eight weeks.

For more information about ways to share your time and talent, contact Joey Lee, TCVC Volunteer Coordinator, at 612-373-2415, weekdays.

### TCVC TREASURER'S REPORT

Ending July 11, 2001 and including income and expenses for the June, 2001 retreat, current balances are:

Operating Fund:	\$1,099.14
Retreat Fund:	3,246.52
Scholarship Fund:	944.00
Backup Fund:	<u>1,500.00</u>
Balance:	\$6,789.66

Greater-than-expected retreat attendance and smaller-than-expected teacher travel expenses resulted in a surplus in our Retreat Fund. This surplus will be applied to expenses for future retreats, thus allowing us to set retreat fees lower than we'd be able to without the surplus.

Thanks to contributors to our Operating and Scholarship funds! We've received donations of \$1,174 this year. TCVC awarded \$1500 in scholarships for the June retreat.

### ATTENDANCE AT JUNE, 2001 RETREAT, LED BY KAMALA MASTERS AND STEVE ARMSTRONG

For readers interested in news about past retreats...

- Fifty-five retreatants attended. Thirty-eight were from MN; 11 were from WI; three were from IA; two from IL; and one from WA.
- Fifteen people attended their first TCVC retreat. Of those, seven were weekenders and eight attended the full nine days. Of the remaining 40 people, 11 attended the weekend, and 29 attended full time.
- Six people heard about the retreat from other people. Four others heard about it via a web site. And the remainder were on the TCVC mailing list or else didn't specify how they heard about the retreat.
- One person attended their first residential vipassana retreat by receiving a full scholarship donated by Vipassana Metta Foundation and a TCVC sangha member.
- And one pair of people sponsored another person to attend full time.

**RESIDENTIAL VIPASSANA MEDITATION RETREAT WITH EUGENE CASH AND MARK COLEMAN  
OCTOBER 17-21, 2001** [www.wordimage.com/tcvc/forms.htm](http://www.wordimage.com/tcvc/forms.htm)

**What is this retreat about?**

This vipassana retreat is suitable for beginning and experienced meditators alike. **Participants will reside at the Tau Center. There is no commuter (meals-only) option.**

Vipassana or insight meditation is a simple and direct practice: the moment-to-moment investigation of the mind-body process through calm, open and precise awareness. Learning to observe our experience from a place of spacious stillness enables us to relate to life with a balance of wisdom and compassion. This experience fosters clarity and penetrating insight into the nature of who we are and increases peace in our daily lives. The retreat will be held in noble silence, which fosters a sense of solitude.

Eugene gives clear and simple meditation instructions, which, along with daily lectures and meditation interviews, provide direction throughout the alternating periods of sitting and walking meditation.

Mark will assist Eugene in all aspects of the retreat.

**About Eugene Cash and Mark Coleman, guiding teachers**



**Eugene Cash** is the Staff teacher at Spirit Rock Insight Meditation Center, Woodacre, CA. He leads the Insight Meditation Community of San Francisco and teaches intensive meditation retreats internationally.

Many streams of the vipassana tradition as well as the Zen and Tibetan lineages of Buddhism influence Eugene's teaching. He has a special interest in the *development and maturation of householder practice*. He also teaches in

the Rihwan School (with A. H. Almaas) where he has studied and practiced inquiry since 1989.

**Mark Coleman** has been engaged in Buddhist practice since 1984 and has studied with Christopher Titmuss and Jack Kornfeld. He has taught meditation in the UK, USA and India and has assisted at retreats with Eugene Cash. He teaches meditation to youth at risk and has an MA in psychology.

**Dana**

Teachers for this retreat do not ask for nor receive any payment from TCVC for the teaching. For support, the teachers rely on

*dana* (meaning *generosity* in the Pali language), a form of voluntary giving by students. Dana enables the teachers to continue devoting themselves to teaching.

Equally important, *dana* provides retreatants an opportunity to practice generosity and open-heartedness. At retreat's end, participants will have an opportunity to practice *dana* by offering contributions. There is no specific contribution amount expected; give what feels right.

**Tau Center: meals, accommodations, travel**

- At the retreat site (Tau Center in Winona, MN), the first meal served is breakfast on October 18 (there's no meal Oct. 17). All meals are vegetarian and high in carbohydrates. The food service center is unable to accommodate special diets. If you have special dietary needs, you may wish to bring along supplemental food that requires no facilities to store or prepare.
- Accommodations include private sleeping rooms supplied with towels and bedding. Showers and lavatories are shared with people of the same gender.
- See the back side of this page for travel directions. To request a ride, check a box on the registration form, and the registrar will call you.
- In the event of bad weather or other emergency, call the TCVC Info Line at 651-229-3139 for retreat status.

**Attendance: arrival and departure**

- **Arrival:** Registration is 6:00–7:30 P.M. Wednesday, October 17. Please do not arrive before 3:00 P.M. Retreatants are expected to attend Wednesday night's 8:00 P.M. opening and stay for the duration of the retreat. (No meal is served October 17. There is no option to attend only the weekend.)
- **Departure:** Your retreat ends Sunday, October 21 at approximately 1:00 P.M. immediately after lunch.

**Retreat fees and refunds**

The registration form (below and on the other side) lists the fees. Send a check, payable to "TCVC," for the full cost of your retreat along with the registration form.

- **Due date:** Your envelope must be **POSTMARKED** on or before

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✂ ..... Cut here to detach the registration form. ....

**TCVC REGISTRATION FORM FOR OCTOBER, 2001 RETREAT WITH EUGENE CASH AND MARK COLEMAN**

Please read "**Attendance**" above and "**Retreat fees and refunds**" above before you fill out this form.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: M F Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ City, state, zip code \_\_\_\_\_

Please change the TCVC mailing list because I've listed a new address or phone number above.

**Please check all that apply:**

- This is my first TCVC Retreat.  I need a ride.  I can give a ride.
- Please have someone contact me prior to the retreat so that I can ask questions about the practice and/or retreat.
- I volunteer to help the retreat manager. (Tasks vary but may include arranging for gifts and flowers, helping set up or clean up at the retreat center, and registering retreatants. The retreat manager will contact you.)
- I volunteer to host a post-retreat party. (The retreat manager will contact you to confirm.)
- How I heard about this retreat:  I'm on the TCVC mailing list.  
 Other (how/when?) \_\_\_\_\_

# RESIDENTIAL VIPASSANA MEDITATION RETREAT OCTOBER 17-21, 2001

(continued from page 3)

- Monday, October 1, the due date, to avoid a late fee.
- Late fee:** Include the late-registration fee if either of these is the case: your application is postmarked on or after Tuesday, October 2 OR your application is postmarked before Oct. 2 but you estimate the application will arrive at the TCVC PO box on a date from October 2 through October 8.
- Registrations not accepted after October 8:** The registrar will not accept registrations received at the TCVC PO box after October 8.
- Request a confirmation:** If your registration is accepted, the registrar won't send a confirmation unless you include (with your registration form) a stamped, self-addressed post-card or envelope with a request that the registrar mail a confirmation to you.
- Cancellation and cancellation fee:** TCVC will retain a \$50 fee on any cancellation received at the TCVC PO box after October 1 or phoned to the registrar after October 1.
- Refunds:** A refund for room and meal fees cannot be guaranteed if your cancellation is received after October 1. (Notify the registrar as soon as possible if you need to cancel because refunds for room and meals at Tau Center are negotiated on a case by case basis by a TCVC representative.)  
A no-show is not eligible for a refund.

### What to bring

- Wear comfortable, loose-fitting clothes.
- Bring a firm pillow or meditation cushion. Also bring a

- blanket or zabuton to place under the pillow or cushion. (TCVC will provide a limited number of meditation cushions.) Chairs will be available, if you prefer to sit in a chair.
- Bring a blanket or shawl to wrap yourself in if you tend to get chilly while sitting during meditation practice.

Please wear unscented personal products, such as shampoo, lotions and deodorant. **Do not use essential oils, perfumes, hairspray, medicinal ointments or aromatic balms.** Scented products are distracting and may trigger allergies in sensitive people.

### Applying for a partial scholarship

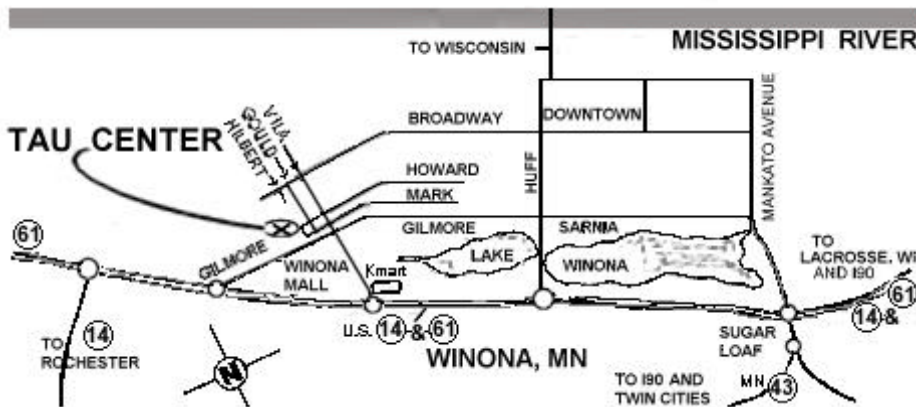
Scholarships are available for up to 50% of room and board. To apply for a partial scholarship, please send 1) a letter giving the background of your need; 2) your registration form; and 3) check for the total cost minus scholarship amount. The registrar will notify you before the retreat about whether or not the scholarship is granted; if it's not granted, you are asked to pay the fee balance upon arrival at the retreat.

### Contacts for this retreat

For questions, contact the retreat registrar, Veronica Weadock, either at 612-721-8932 or via letter to Attention: Veronica Weadock, TCVC, PO Box 14683, Mpls, MN 55414; state your name, postal mailing address, phone number and time of day to call in case a call is needed.  
For emergency contacts, Tau Center's phone number is 507-454-2993. **Do not direct retreat questions to Tau Center.**

(continued in the next column)

### Directions to Tau Center in Winona, MN from Minneapolis/St. Paul



It's 2½ hours drive time in fair weather. Take U.S. Hwy 52 south past Rochester to I90 east. Then follow I90 east to MN Hwy 43 North. Proceed along Hwy 43 North until you arrive at an intersection with U.S. Highways 61 and 14 at the southern edge of Winona.  
Turn left (west) onto U.S. Hwy 61 and proceed to Vila, which is the entrance to the Winona Mall. Turn right (north) onto Vila, then proceed to a 4-way stop sign at Gilmore and Vila. Continue north on Vila and go one block to Mark street. Turn left onto Mark.  
Go two blocks to Hilbert Street, where you'll see Tau Center.

### (continued) TCVC REGISTRATION FORM FOR OCTOBER, 2001 RETREAT WITH EUGENE CASH AND MARK COLEMAN

Choose one of the following fees for one person for October 17-21:

Room and meals \$230.00    OR     Room only (no meals) \$165.00    \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(There is no commuter (meals-only) option. There is no weekend option.)

Late fee: **\$25** if registration is postmarked after Monday, October 1 OR received at TCVC's PO box on any of the dates from Oct. 2-8. **(The registrar will not accept registrations received at the TCVC PO box after Monday, October 8.)**    \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Optional, non-tax-deductible contribution to TCVC funds    \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Please specify  Scholarship Fund     Operating Fund

TOTAL ENCLOSED:    \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Please send this registration form and check for payment in full (payable to "TCVC") to:**  
**Attention: Veronica Weadock, TCVC, PO Box 14683, Minneapolis, MN 55414**

## MEDITATION PRACTICE OPPORTUNITIES

### TWIN CITIES

#### VIPASSANA PRACTICE

##### Phat An Temple/Vietnamese Buddhist Association of MN

Saturdays, from 6–9 A.M. vipassana meditation session.

Second Saturday of the month, a day-long vipassana retreat, 6 A.M.–4 P.M. If we change the schedule due to activities at the Temple, we will inform a week in advance to people on our e-mail list.

at  
Phat An Temple  
475 Minnesota Avenue  
Roseville, MN 55113  
(Please do not send letters to the above address.)

For information or description of attendance protocol at the Temple, contact  
Tel: 612-348-3587 weekdays (Nita Truitner)  
or nita.truitner@co.hennepin.mn.us

##### Rivers' Way Meditation

Monthly vipassana retreats for beginners and experienced meditators alike, from 1–5 P.M. on the following Sundays: Sept. 16, Oct. 21, Nov. 18, Dec. 9, 2001 at  
St. Paul Yoga Center  
1162 Selby Ave., St. Paul  
(at Selby and Dunlap off of Lexington).

Events are offered on a dana basis.  
Tel: 952-253-5228 (Merra Young of Rivers' Way Meditation)

##### Common Ground Meditation Center

The Center supports the Twin Cities' mindfulness or vipassana meditation community. Because Mark Nunberg is on retreat, guest teachers will lead the programs. All programs are offered free of charge; donations are welcomed.

3400 E. 26th Street  
Minneapolis, MN 55406  
Tel: 612-722-8260  
(Mark Nunberg and Wynn Fricke)

Web:  
<http://www.commongroundmeditation.org>

### TIBETAN TRADITION

##### Minneapolis Shambala Meditation Center

1304 University Ave NE (2<sup>nd</sup> floor)  
Minneapolis, MN 55458  
Tel: 612-331-7737

### ZEN PRACTICE

##### Clouds in Water Zen Center

308 Prince Street  
St. Paul, MN 55101  
Tel: 651-222-6968  
Web: <http://www.cloudsinwater.org/>  
(Doshō Port, guiding teacher)

##### Dharma Field Zen Center

3118 West 49th Street  
Minneapolis MN 55410  
Tel: 612-928-4868  
(Steve Hagen, head teacher)

##### Minnesota Zen Meditation Center

3343 East Calhoun Parkway  
Minneapolis, MN 55408  
Tel: 612-822-5313

### OTHER

##### Winona, MN Sitting Group

A vipassana meditation group meets 8:30–9:15 A.M. every Sunday.  
Tel: 507-457-0347 (Lynn Rabuse)

##### Madison Insight Meditation Group

Sponsors vipassana retreats and related activities in Madison, Wisconsin.

- Sept. 6–9, 2001 Eugene Cash
- April 25–28, 2002 Wes Nisker

Tel: 608-255-4559 (Cindy McCallum)  
E-mail: [uppekha@yahoo.com](mailto:uppekha@yahoo.com)  
Web: <http://www.vipassana.net>

##### Mid America Dharma

Sponsors residential and non-residential insight meditation retreats and related activities.

- Oct. 5–7, 2001 Matthew Flickstein and Ginny Morgan
- Nov. 12–20, 2001 Bhante Gunaratana
- Feb. 23–24, 2002 Rodney Smith

Mid America Dharma  
P.O. Box 414411  
Kansas City, Missouri 64141-4411  
Tel: 573-817-9942 (Ginny Morgan)  
E-mail: [phil@midamericadharm.org](mailto:phil@midamericadharm.org)  
Web: <http://www.midamericadharm.org>

##### Forest Way Insight Meditation Center

Matthew Flickstein leads vipassana retreats nationally and internationally and leads a teacher training program.  
P.O. Box 491  
Ruckersville, VA 22968  
Tel: 804-990-9300  
E-mail: [forestway@cstone.net](mailto:forestway@cstone.net)  
Web: <http://www.forestway.org>

## OTHER RESOURCES IN TWIN CITIES AREA

##### Buddhist Peace Fellowship

For information about the next meeting in the St. Paul/Minneapolis area, call 651-699-1330 (Lee Lewis) or 612-825-2820 (Martha Boesing).

##### Beverly White Community Outreach

Opportunity to facilitate simple self-awareness meditation sessions for people in challenging life circumstances. Call 612-929-0901 (Cal Appleby).

##### Web site: Buddhism in the Twin Cities

<http://tcfreenet.org/org/buddhism> lists organizations that sponsor Buddhist-related events, classes and meditation practice sessions.

## TCVC calendar: vipassana retreats and other events

Date	Event	Location and contact	Suitable for whom?
Oct. 17–21, 2001	Vipassana retreat with teachers Eugene Cash and Mark Coleman	Tau Center (Winona, MN) Registrar: Veronica Weadock, 612-721-8932	Beginning and experienced meditators alike. See pages 3–4, this issue of <i>GrassRoots Dhamma</i> .
Feb. 8–10, 2002	Non-residential vipassana retreat with Santikaro Bhikkhu	Sisters of St. Joseph Carondelet Center (St. Paul, MN) <i>Contact is to be determined</i>	Beginning and experienced meditators alike.
March 8–17, 2002	Vipassana retreat with Marcia Rose	Christine Center (Willard, Wisconsin) <i>Contact is to be determined</i>	Beginning and experienced meditators alike.
April 21, 2002	One-day vipassana retreat with Wes Nisker	Sisters of St. Joseph Carondelet Center (St. Paul, MN) <i>Contact is to be determined</i>	Beginning and experienced meditators alike.
April 22–23, 2002	Interviews with Wes Nisker about meditation practice	<i>Location and contact are to be determined</i>	<i>To be determined</i>

### *about Twin Cities Vipassana Cooperative (TCVC) and GrassRoots Dhamma*



**TCVC Info Line 651-229-3139 for information about business meetings and retreats**



**TCVC web site <http://www.wordimage.com/tevc.htm>**



**E-mail [tcvcoop@hotmail.com](mailto:tcvcoop@hotmail.com)**



**TCVC, P.O. Box 14683, Minneapolis, MN 55414 Attn. *GrassRoots Dhamma***

TCVC is a network of people interested in practicing vipassana meditation, also known as insight meditation or mindfulness meditation. Since 1986, our mission has been to provide opportunities for residential retreat practice. TCVC operates as an informal club. All programs are run by volunteers who reside primarily in or near the Twin Cities of St. Paul and Minneapolis, MN.

To add your name to the mailing list, send your name, postal address, e-mail address and home phone to the TCVC e-mail address or PO box listed above.

*GrassRoots Dhamma* is published three or four times a year by Twin Cities Vipassana Cooperative.

Main editor: Kay Wicker Other editors and dhamma workers for this issue: Robin Blake, Steve Burt, Sylvester Fernandez, Joey Lee, Paul Norr, David Skarjune, Joanne Skarjune and Merrra Young.

We welcome material relating to your vipassana practice at home, in retreat, and in daily life, to be included in *GrassRoots Dhamma* when space is available. Newcomers and old timers are equally encouraged to contribute. We are happy to include your practice-related announcements as well. Send copy to the e-mail address or postal address listed above.

**Twin Cities Vipassana Cooperative  
P.O. Box 14683  
Minneapolis, MN 55414**