



TCVC ANNOUNCEMENTS

Changes in This Issue: More Retreats, Altered Registration Procedure and Less Information

2002 is a busy year for TCVC! To give you more time to plan your schedule and to decrease our mailing costs, this issue of *GrassRoots Dhamma* describes four retreats.

One registration form serves for all retreats described in this issue. Retain the registration form, and photocopy it when you are ready to send your registration.

Mail your registration form and fee directly to the registrar named for the retreat.

Also, include with your registration a self-addressed, stamped, business-size envelope if you want to receive driving directions to the retreat venue along with orientation information. We encourage those of you attending your first TCVC retreat to request the directions and orientation info and to read it ahead of time. "Old timers" (those who've attended a TCVC retreat at the retreat site) may not need to request the information.

GrassRoots Dhamma now carries fewer details about specific retreats. As mentioned above, if you request it with your retreat registration, material will be mailed to you. Also, our web site at <http://www.tcvc.info> carries more details under "Retreats" and "Teachers." And remember, you can call the retreat registrar if you have questions.

Fall, 2002: the Next Scheduled Mailing of GRD

Fall, 2002 is the next planned distribution to everyone on the TCVC mailing list. If, in the past, you waited for the arrival of *GrassRoots Dhamma* (GRD) to jog your memory about an upcoming retreat, please don't wait. [Mark your calendar now for retreats and registration dates described inside.](#)

Attend April 7th TCVC Annual Meeting

Please join us for the annual TCVC meeting on Sunday, April 7, 1 to 3:30 PM at Common Ground Meditation Center, 3400 E. 26th Street, Minneapolis, MN. We value your input and welcome your participation. You can recommend teachers to lead meditation retreats; acknowledge the many TCVC people whose enthusiasm brought us retreats between April, 2001 and April, 2002; learn about volunteer opportunities; and renew or make acquaintances with sangha members.

If you have questions about the meeting or want descriptions of open volunteer positions described below, contact Joey Lee, TCVC Volunteer Coordinator, at 651-310-9862.

Volunteer opportunities for 2002/2003 year:

- Newsletter Coordinator
- Volunteer Coordinator
- One backup person for each of the five positions on the TCVC Coordinating Committee

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QIGONG AND MINDFULNESS PRACTICE

by Paul Norr

More practitioners of Buddhist mindfulness meditation (MM) are studying Qigong. This article briefly introduces Qigong and discusses how MM and Qigong can work together.

Qigong is an old Chinese practice with many applications and may appear in many different forms. It is often practiced for health maintenance. Some trainings emphasize healing from specific maladies done as either self-healing or healing others. Qigong is also studied as the foundation upon which Asian martial arts are based.

At the more esoteric end of the spectrum, Qigong is a meditative path which nurtures awareness of the flow of experience, explores the nature of body and mind, and cultivates opening to more fundamental, subtle aspects of reality. In practice, Qigong training often encompasses a number of these strains in a creative amalgam.

Qigong has roots in numerous traditions, Daoism, Confucianism and, not the least of which, Buddhism. For this reason alone, there are aspects of Qigong which readily translate to the terminology and perspective of MM practitioners.

Importantly for us, Qigong and mindfulness meditation practice can complement and support each other. In MM, one cultivates stability of mind, concentration and attentiveness to states of body and mind. This is formally done in the seated and walking postures. One challenge is often how to translate MM practice into the full flow of life. Here Qigong excels as a bridge. It provides a broad framework of postures and movements, both seated and standing, to mindfully experience body and mind in action.

Qigong's focus on the flow of energy provides an additional perspective with which to explore mindfulness of the body. Finally, there are significant health benefits of Qigong including harmonizing the body and breath, releasing stagnant energy, and cultivating energy. These can help integrate and harmonize the bodily aches and challenging mind states that often arise in intensive mindfulness practice.

Qigong utilizes postures, breathing, visualizations and meditations. All of these require a disciplined and focused mind. MM has a variety of methodical practices to stabilize the mind and develop bodily awareness needed for Qigong.

Buddhism has been called a science of the mind. Qigong may be the science of the activated body/mind. Where a core Buddhist archetype is the seated meditator, an enduring Qigong image is a practitioner, inwardly focused while moving in a slow, graceful dance. While there is much more to each practice than this, these fundamental images are suggestive.

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Private Interviews with Wes Nisker, April 22

On April 22 (following the April 21 TCVC retreat), Wes Nisker can give private interviews to answer meditation practice questions. Interviews are at the home of Naomi Baer, 1812 Princeton in St. Paul. An interview lasts 20 minutes and can be scheduled from 9:30 AM–12:30 PM. To schedule an interview, please contact Naomi at 651-698-1458 or at baern@quest.net.

TCVC Sitting Group, 7:00-8:30 PM, Sundays

You are invited to the TCVC sitting group, every Sunday night, at the St. Paul Yoga Center at 1162 Selby Avenue (one block west of Lexington Avenue) in St. Paul, MN. The evening begins at 7:00 PM with 20 minutes of walking meditation followed by a 40-minute sit. The bell is rung after the first 20 minutes of sitting for those who wish to walk for the next 20 minutes. At 8:00 PM there is an informal sharing time, after which we conclude with a guided metta (lovingkindness) meditation.

Beginners are always welcome and are especially encouraged to attend at 6:30 PM on the first Sunday of the month. At that time (prior to the regular schedule), a senior student will provide beginning meditation instruction. For more information, contact Merra Young at 952-253-5228.

We Welcome New TCVC Volunteers

Thank you, Veronica Weadock, for taking on duties of Mailbox Volunteer, retrieving and distributing mail from TCVC's PO box. (Also, Veronica's voice is heard on the TCVC Info Line, giving pre-recorded information about upcoming retreats and other events.)

Thank you, Kyoko Katayama, for volunteering as Co-Retreat Coordinator to serve along with Merra Young.

TCVC Treasurer's Report

Listed below are fund balances as of Feb. 17, 2002:

| | |
|------------------|-----------------|
| Operating fund | \$ 858.34 |
| Retreat fund | 759.74 |
| Scholarship fund | 2,736.50 |
| Backup fund | <u>1,500.00</u> |
| Total | \$5,854.58 |

TCVC gratefully accepts donations for scholarships and operating expenses. Scholarships assist those who would otherwise be financially unable to attend retreats. The operating fund pays for administrative expenses and part of mailing expenses. You may send a donation to TCVC's PO box, or include it with your retreat fee. You may designate your choice of scholarship fund or operating fund. Because TCVC operates as an informal club, your donation is not tax deductible.

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QIGONG AND MINDFULNESS PRACTICE, continued from page 1)

To use Daoist terms, Qigong may be the active Yang to MM's more quiescent Yin. Those who study both traditions find that they can, in fact, complement each other nicely and are simply alternate, contemplative perspectives to explore the nature of body and mind and develop a harmonious and balanced life.

Editor's notes:

Paul Norr is a Shiatsu therapist who practices and teaches both mindfulness meditation and Qigong.

See page 3 for descriptions of a TCVC-sponsored, May 3–5 workshop for Qigong and mindfulness and May 6–8 additional Qigong training.



OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vipassana Metta Foundation Benefit, June 23

Please join us for an evening of fun, food and dhamma schmooze with Kamala Masters and Steve Armstrong at Common Ground Meditation Center.

Kamala and Steve would like to thank everyone who has supported the Maui hermitage and give an update on progress made so far. Donations received at this benefit will go toward the \$25,000 goal for a Midwest kuti (cabin) at the Maui hermitage.

The benefit will be held Sunday, June 23, 7:00–9:00 PM at Common Ground Meditation Center located at 3400 East 26th Street in Minneapolis.

This event is sponsored by the Midwest Kutu Committee: Naomi Baer, Margie Fagnoli, Diane Nunberg, Virginia Robinson, Joanne Skarjune and Merra Young. For more information, contact Joanne Skarjune at 612-724-9357.

TCVC RETREAT SCHEDULE, APRIL TO NOVEMBER 2002

April 21: Non-residential vipassana retreat with Wes Nisker,



at Sisters of St. Joseph Carondelet Center, 1890 Randolph, St. Paul, MN. The Carondelet Center is just west of Fairview, near the College of St. Catherine. Registrar for this one-day retreat is Naomi Baer, 1812 Princeton, St. Paul, MN 55105; 651-698-1458; baern@qwest.net with *Subject: Nisker retreat*. Registration begins Mar. 25 and is due no later than April 13.

This retreat is suitable for beginning and experienced meditators. Please arrive between 8:30 (doors open) and 8:45 AM. The retreat ends at 5:00 PM. Lunch and tea are provided. The theme is "Your Nature as Nature." We'll make creative use of traditional Buddhist meditation practices and information from modern science to examine our common human condition. The day will include guided meditations: on the body as composed of natural elements; on the primal origin of emotions and thoughts; how the brain works to create a self; on death and dying; and the mystery of consciousness. By recognizing ourselves as part of the wider web of cosmic and biological evolution, we begin to find relief from the suffering that we feel as a separate, disconnected self.

Wes Nisker has practiced vipassana meditation for 30 years with various teachers in Asia and the West. He is founder and co-editor of the Buddhist journal *Inquiring Mind* and is author of the bestselling books, *Crazy Wisdom* and *Buddha's Nature: A Practical Guide to Discovering Your Place in the Cosmos*. Wes is an affiliate teacher at Spirit Rock Center, Woodacre, CA and teaches retreats and workshops internationally.

May 3-5: Non-residential Qigong and mindfulness workshop with Franz Moeckl,



at Sisters of St. Joseph Carondelet Center, 1890 Randolph, St. Paul, MN. The Carondelet Center is just west of Fairview, near the College of St. Catherine. Registrar for this workshop is Paul Norr, 2153 Berkeley Ave. S., St. Paul, MN 55105; 651-698-1772; e-mail to p.norr@att.net with *Subject: Moeckl workshop*. Registration begins March 25 and is due no later than April 26.

This workshop is suitable for beginning and experienced meditators and Qigong practitioners. This workshop includes sitting meditation practice as well as Qigong practice. Lunch and tea are provided. Please arrive Friday, May 3 between 6:30 (doors open) and 6:45 PM. Retreat ends at 5:00 PM May 5.

Franz Moeckl has practiced Qigong and Tai Chi Ch'uan for more than 20 years. Since 1985, he has practiced vipassana meditation in the West and in Asia, where he spent time as a Buddhist monk. Franz teaches Qigong in the United States, Europe and Asia, often at vipassana retreats.

May 6, 7, 8: Qigong training with Franz Moeckl,

at Common Ground Meditation Center, 3400 E. 26th St., Minneapolis, MN. You must pre-register by contacting Paul Norr at 651-698-1772 or at p.norr@att.net. Pre-registration begins March 25 and closes when the attendance limit is reached. Space is limited. This training is offered totally on a dana (donation) basis. We meet 9:30 AM–12:30 PM each day.

This training builds on the material presented at the May 3–5 workshop (described above). Pre-requisite: this training is for people who attended Franz's May 3–5, 2002 workshop or Franz's 2001 workshop or for those who have equivalent Qigong training. TCVC and Common Ground Meditation Center co-sponsor these sessions.

June 14-23 Residential vipassana retreat, with weekend option, with Kamala Masters and Steve Armstrong,



at Tau Center, 511 Hilbert Street, Winona, MN. Registrar for this retreat is Steve Burt, 3937 21st Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55407; 612-721-1021; email to tcvcoop@hotmail.com with *Subject: to Steve Burt*. Registration begins April 15 and is due no later than May 31. No registrations will be accepted after June 5.

This retreat is suitable for beginning and experienced meditators. Retreatants arrive Friday, June 14 between 4 and 7 PM. For those attending the weekend (June 14–16), the retreat ends 5 PM June 16. For everyone else, the retreat ends Sun., June 23, approx. 1 PM after lunch.

Kamala Masters and **Steve Armstrong** lead retreats internationally, including the annual three-month retreat at Insight Meditation Society, Barre, Massachusetts. Kamala began her dhamma practice with Munindra more than 20 years ago and has received instruction in intensive retreats from Sayadaw U Pandita with whom she has practiced vipassana meditation and lovingkindness meditation. Steve has studied the dhamma and practiced vipassana meditation since 1975. While ordained as a monk for five years in Burma, under the guidance of Sayadaw U Pandita, he undertook intensive, silent practice of vipassana and lovingkindness meditations.

(continued on the next page)

(TCVC Retreat Schedule, continued from the previous page)

November 1-17: Residential vipassana retreat with Matthew Flickstein,



at Christine Center, Willard, WI. Christine Center is in central Wisconsin, approximately 2½ hours from Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN and 2½ hours from Madison, WI. Registrar for this retreat is Bob Thomas, 3757 Blaisdell Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55409; hm 612-824-4827; wk 612-348-3501; e-mail to bob.thomas@co.hennepin.mn.us with *Subject: Flickstein retreat*. Registration begins March 25 (by paying either a deposit or payment in full) and is due no later than September 30.

This retreat is suitable for experienced meditators who have attended at least one 5-day vipassana retreat. Attendance is limited to 19 retreatants, including one spot for the TCVC retreat manager. The theme will be "Dying into Life." The focus will be on advanced practices including death meditations, choiceless awareness, non-meditation, and taking our seat in the world. Retreatants will undertake a self-retreat for the final five days of the retreat, meditating primarily in their private room or cabin.

Matthew Flickstein is resident teacher at Forest Way Insight Meditation Center in the Blue Ridge Mountains. Matt has been practicing and teaching vipassana meditation for more than 21 years. Prior to developing Forest Way Insight Meditation Center, he was a psychotherapist and facilitated personal development workshops. He is author of *Journey to the Center: A Meditation Workbook* and *Swallowing the River Ganges: A Practice Guide to the Path of Purification* (Wisdom Publications).

INFORMATION ABOUT TCVC RETREATS AND RETREAT REGISTRATION

Vipassana (Insight or Mindfulness) Meditation

This meditation practice is a simple, direct, moment-to-moment investigation of the mind/body process through calm and focused awareness. Learning to observe experience from a place of spacious stillness enables one 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 increased peace in our daily lives.

Retreat Format Each retreat's description on pages 3 and 4 describes prior meditation experience required, if any. At these retreats, the guiding teacher's clear and simple instructions will provide direction and understanding throughout the alternating periods of sitting and walking meditations. There will be time scheduled for questions, with individual interviews scheduled for those attending the longer residential retreats. Retreats are held in noble silence.

Meals are vegetarian.

Dana (Generosity) Since the Teachings of the Buddha are considered priceless, they have traditionally been offered freely and out of the spirit of dana. Teachers for these retreats do not ask for nor receive any payment from TCVC for their teaching. At retreat's end, retreatants may practice dana by offering a voluntary donation to express appreciation for the benefit they have received and support for the teacher's continued dhamma work and meditation practice.

Attendance Retreatants are expected to arrive in time for the opening of the retreat and to stay for the duration of the retreat.

What to Bring

Please do not wear or bring strongly scented lotions or shampoos, perfumes, incense, essential oils or aromatic balms.

Bring comfortable, loose-fitting clothes, along with a blanket for sitting. Bring a meditation cushion or bench and a soft

floor pad for meditation. (TCVC provides a limited number of meditation cushions.) Chairs are also available for sitting meditation.

Scholarships Scholarships are available for up to 50% of the retreat fee or a maximum of a \$250, whichever is smaller. To apply for a scholarship, attach a letter with your registration giving the background of your need and the amount of your request. Send a check for the retreat fee minus the scholarship amount requested. Those with financial resources may wish to help others by donating to the scholarship fund.

Registration Begin and Due Dates and Late Fee

Registrars can accept registrations on or after the beginning date specified for each retreat. *Any registration postmarked or received after the due date will be subject to a higher fee, listed on the registration form.* Beginning and due dates are specified on pages 3 and 4 for each retreat.

To Register Send a check payable to TCVC for the full amount along with the completed registration form. Address your envelope to the registrar specified on page 3 or page 4 for the retreat you want to attend. If you want to receive directions to the retreat venue and orientation information, please include a self-addressed, stamped, business-size envelope along with your registration. Alternatively, you may wish to retrieve this information under the Retreats section of our web site at <http://www.tcvc.info>.

If you want to receive a confirmation, send a stamped, addressed postcard if you haven't included a business-size envelope.

Retreat Fee See the Registration Form on page 5.

Cancellations Notify the registrar as early as possible if you need to cancel. TCVC will retain a \$25 fee for all cancellations received after the close date, along with any cancellation amount charged by the retreat venue.

TWIN CITIES VIPASSANA COOPERATIVE (TCVC) RETREAT REGISTRATION FORM

Send a check payable to TCVC for the full fee, along with this form, to the specific registrar for the retreat you plan to attend (see pages 3 and 4). To register for more than one retreat, send a photocopy of this form to the registrar for each retreat. Your timely registration helps ease the workload for TCVC volunteers.

Please print:

Name: _____ Home phone: (____) _____
 Address: _____ City, state, zip code: _____
 E-mail address: _____ Gender: Male Female

Please check all that apply:

- I have enclosed a stamped, addressed, business-size envelope. Please send info about the retreat site, including driving directions.
- This is my first TCVC retreat.
- I can help set up or clean up for this retreat. (Retreat manager will contact you.)
- I have special physical needs. (I've enclosed a description, or I will contact the retreat registrar to request more information.)

For a residential retreat, only:

- I need a ride. I can give a ride.

Please fill in the fee, below, for the one retreat for which you're registering.

Fee enclosed:

_____ April 21, 2002: Non-residential with Wes Nisker at Sisters of St. Joseph Carondelet Center, St. Paul, MN
 Cost: \$35 (\$50 after April 13)

_____ May 3–5, 2002: Non-residential with Franz Moeckl at Sisters of St. Joseph Carondelet Center, St. Paul, MN
 Cost: \$55 (\$70 after April 26)

_____ June 14–23, 2002: Residential with Kamala Masters and Steve Armstrong at Tau Center, Winona, MN
 Cost: Weekend (June 14–16) \$165 (\$190 after May 31)
 Full time (June 14–23) \$520 (\$545 after May 31)
 No registrations will be accepted after June 5.

_____ November 1–17, 2002: Residential with Matthew Flickstein at Christine Center, Willard, WI
 Cost: Optional deposit of \$250 with remainder of \$715 due no later than Sept. 30 (after Sept. 30, the remainder due is \$750)
 -Or-
 Full payment of \$965 (\$1000 after Sept. 30)

_____ Optional, non-tax-deductible donation to TCVC _____ Operating Fund or _____ Scholarship fund

TCVC vipassana retreats and other events

| Date in 2002 | Event |
|--------------|--|
| Sundays | Gathering for meditation and sangha fellowship (see page 2 for more information) |
| April 7 | TCVC annual meeting (see page 1) |
| April 21 | Vipassana retreat with Wes Nisker (see page 3), followed by April 22 meditation interviews (see page 2) |
| May 3–5 | Qigong and mindfulness workshop with Franz Moeckl (see page 3) |
| May 6, 7, 8 | Qigong training with Franz Moeckl (see page 3; TCVC and Common Ground Meditation Center are co-sponsors) |
| June 14–23 | Vipassana retreat with Kamala Masters and Steve Armstrong (see page 3) |
| Nov. 1–17 | Vipassana retreat with Matthew Flickstein (see page 4) |

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.tcvc.info>



E-mail tcvcoop@hotmail.com



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

Twin Cities Vipassana Cooperative (TCVC) is a community of people interested in developing and deepening their meditation practice. We provide opportunities to hear and practice the teachings of vipassana (insight) and metta (lovingkindness) meditation primarily in the Theravada Buddhist tradition. 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 periodically by Twin Cities Vipassana Cooperative.

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

Twin Cities Vipassana Cooperative

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