

BELLINGHAM DHARMA NEWS

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FALL 2008

FALL IN BELLINGHAM

First it felt like Winter with no Fall. Now the shortening daylight and dropping leaves tell us it really is Fall! The Bellingham Dharma communities continue to change like the seasons.

In this issue the Zen, Insight, Shambhala and Mindfulness dharma groups present some news and information about their activities.



Bellingham Dharma Association News

Dear Friends,

The Bellingham Dharma Association is happy to announce that we are holding this year's **Buddhism in Bellingham** public lecture series at Red Cedar Dharma Hall.

We're excited about this event and would love help with publicity. If you have time for postering or handbill spreading (especially to outlying areas of the county and surrounding counties) you can pick up both at the Red Cedar Dharma Hall. And, more importantly, invite your friends. These are enjoyable, no-pressure, family-friendly events. Local teachers will share the Dharma in a beautiful new center. We try to make good on the series' slogan of "Practical teachings from an ancient tradition by qualified local teachers. "

More details can be found on the events calendar at the Association's web-site <http://www.bellinghamdharma.org> or see the Events calendar at <http://www.redcedarzen.org> if you want to give friends or colleagues a link for more info.

Wishing you well,
Tim Burentt, BDA Treasurer and Karen Fitzgerald BDA Chair.

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BUDDHISM IN BELLINGHAM 2008 SERIES

The Bellingham Dharma Association presents its third annual public lecture series

Buddhism in Bellingham 2008, is a series of 4 lectures by local Buddhist teachers.

Talks will be held at the Red Cedar Dharma Hall, 1021 N. Forest Street, in Bellingham. A \$5-\$10 donations is suggested.

Family friendly: a quality children's program is available with Children's Art teacher Shelby Sneva.

Saturday October 11th, 10am: Zoketsu Norman Fischer, Everyday Zen Foundation, "A Life Beyond Thinking, On Zen Meditation." Norman is a Zen teacher and Poet who's most recent book is "Sailing Home: Use Homer's Odyssey to Navigate Life's Perils and Pitfalls." Norman recently appeared on the Oprah show to discuss this latest book.

Saturday October 18th, 10:00am: Paul Warwick, Bellingham Shambhala Center, "Buddha's Smile: the Battle Beneath the Bo Tree"

Sunday October 26th, 10:00am: Nomon Tim Burnett, Red Cedar Zen Community, "The Practice of Serenity". Note Sunday date.

Saturday November 1st, 10:00am: John Robinson, Bellingham Insight Meditation Society, explores the topic, "Happiness is Not What You Think"

Practical teachings from an ancient tradition by qualified local teachers. Talks will include a short guided meditation and a question and answer period. The public is warmly invited.

www.BellinghamDharma.org or (360) 398-7008
(or contact Tim directly tim@redcedarzen.org 360-223-0687)

MORNING MEDITATIONS AT RED CEDAR DHARMA HALL

There is a silent morning meditation period Monday –Friday from 6:30 – 7:15 AM at the Red Cedar Dharma Hall, 1021 N. Forest. This meditation period is not sponsored by any particular tradition and is open to all. Donations are appreciated. The meditation period ends with 2 short chants in English; chant cards are provided.

BELLINGHAM INSIGHT MEDITATION SOCIETY (BIMS)

STEVE HANSEN, BIMS BOARD VICE CHAIR

The Bellingham Insight group meets every Tuesday evening at the Red Cedar Dharma Hall on 1021 North Forest (just south of Maple Street). Read on for notes on recent and upcoming events, our programs and retreats. Our programs are also listed on our web site: www.bellinghaminsight.org.

Retreats and Classes

Ajaan Geoff (Thanissaro Bhikkhu) from the Metta Forest Monastery near San Diego came for a non-residential retreat at the Red Cedar Dharma Hall in September. The subject was a very thorough presentation of "dependent co-arising". Almost 60 people attended and the responses indicate a high level of satisfaction on the part of the participants. See the discussion of this retreat by Joe Hebert elsewhere in this newsletter.

Jean La Valley and **John Robinson** will lead a one-day class entitled "**Beginning Again: Introduction to Insight Meditation**" on Saturday October 4th from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Red Cedar Dharma Hall. Contact Jean La Valley, ajeanelavalley@yahoo.com or 676-9971. A donation to the Bellingham Insight group is suggested.

Heather Martin will lead a five-day **Metta Meditation Retreat** at Camp Samish on Samish Island from the 22nd through the 26th of October. That is Wednesday through Sunday. The cost is \$195, plus Dana for the teacher. Contact Rem Ryals, remthefem@yahoo.com or 647-3353.

Tuesday Night Programs

On Tuesday nights we have silent meditation from 7:00 to 7:45. After the meditation we have the following programs:

- 1st Tuesday - **Social Hour** –We break out the tea and cookies and enjoy a relaxed discussion of issues and friendly chatting. This is our time to get to know our Sangha friends.

- 2nd Tuesday – **The Paramies** – Mary Haberman is leading a lively discussion of the Paramies (or virtues or perfections) handed down from the Buddha. They are 1) Generosity, 2) Morality, 3) Renunciation, 4) Wisdom, 5) Energy, 6) Patience, 7) Truthfulness, 8) Determination, 9) Loving kindness and 10) Equanimity. Mary has a knack for making acronyms and she scrambled the order of the list a little to get Your PET is a GEM in this WoRLD. We've done some work on Generosity, Morality and Renunciation over the past few months. Prior attendance is not required.

- 3rd Tuesday - Book discussion, led by John Graber. We will be starting on **The Dhammapada** in October, using Thanissaro Bhikkhu's translation as the primary source. Some of us have other translations and people are encouraged to read and bring those for comparison. We have books donated by the Metta Forest Monastery. (We suggest a donation to the monastery to help them with printing costs.)

- 4th Tuesday - Sutta studies, led by Caroline Kingsbury. We are using the book **In the Buddha's Words** by Bhikkhu Bodhi. We have been working through this book for awhile. Prior reading of the selection is not required, nor is having the book. We read the section aloud and discuss the suttas.

- 5th Tuesday – This period is left open for ad hoc programs and discussions, such as taped dharma talks.

Weekend programs

The BIMS group has use of the Red Cedar Dharma Hall one weekend each month. Generally this is the second weekend. (Not in October, though.) When we do not use our weekend for non-residential retreats, there is a half-day mini-retreat on Sunday mornings from 9:30 to noon. Here are the half-day mini-retreat dates for the next few months:

October 5th

November 9th

December 14th

Thursday Noon Mediation

The BIMS group sponsors a 45 minute sit at lunchtime on Thursdays. The sit starts at 12:10 and ends at 12:55. There is only the meditation--no program or reading. Anyone is welcome.



BELLINGHAM MINDFULNESS COMMUNITY NEWS

Opening the Mountain, Lighting the Lamp

On September 20th, Bellingham Mindfulness Community joined the Mountain Lamp Community to celebrate the opening of the new meditation hall at their rural practice center near Acme, WA. A ceremony honoring our ancient Buddhist tradition and blessing the new hall was led by Order of Interbeing members, Jon Prescott and Mike Melancon. Ted Williams led us in singing the Heart Sutra, accompanied by friends on the guitar, drum and bells. Malia Prescott played a Telemann suite on her viola. Emily Warn offered her poem of dedication. Jack Duffy, Roshi, and Eileen Kiera, Dharma-macarya led a blessing and the 65 plus participants joined in dedicating the hall and the merit of the ceremony for the well-being of our earth and all her inhabitants. The joy of creation and the smiles of completion were visible on everyone's faces as we warmed the new meditation hall, even as the beauty of the space warmed our hearts.

The ceremony was followed by feasting, music and a general celebration of our community. Two tables laden with entrees, salads and desserts served up a celebratory feast, and our meal was accompanied by the music of cellist Parke Burgess, and the sweet vocals of Mockingbird. The celebration marked the end of one and one-half years of fund raising, architectural design, permitting as a commercial building (we're legal!) and construction.

We invite you to join us for daily sitting (6:30 – 8:30am), Zenkai and Days of Mindfulness, and retreats in the years ahead. Please call Bethan at 360-592-0600 for further information about Mountain Lamp or check our web-site at www.mountainlamp.org.



Fall Practice Opportunities with the Bellingham Mindfulness Community

During the fall, we will be practicing and studying the 14 Mindfulness Trainings of the Order of Interbeing. Eileen Kiera, dharma heir of the Ven. Thich Nhat Hanh, will be offering Dharma talks on Oct. 15, 22, 29 and Nov. 5 and 12 that explore Buddhist engagement in the world.

Days of Mindfulness will be held on November 16th at the Seattle Practice Center and on December 21st at Mountain Lamp Community from 10am to 4pm. Please contact Danna Zelenka at dzelenka@bluebottle.com or Brenda Miller at madrone2@earthlink.com For further information about classes and Days of Mindfulness.

Mindfulness Community of Puget Sound is holding a non-residential retreat at the Seattle Practice Center from Oct. 24th to 26th. Members of MCPS are offering housing to people coming from out-of-town. The topic of the retreat is "Deepening Our Engagement: Stepping Forth in the world with the Precepts as our light." Please contact Sue Perkins at susanperkins@msn.com for more information and registration.



SHAMBHALA COMMUNITY NEWS

Pacific Northwest Winter Dathun with John Osajima

December 6 / 2:00 PM - January 3 / 10:00 AM

Price: Whole dathun: \$1,150 CAD (discounts available)

The Pacific Northwest Shambhala community heartily invites newcomers and experienced meditators alike to join us for all or part of our fifth annual Winter Dathün at Camp Pringle, on Shawnigan Lake, British Columbia from December 6th, 2008 to January 3rd, 2009.

The dathün is a one-month residential meditation retreat, conducted in accordance with practices established at the first retreats led by Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche over thirty years ago. Our focus is the mindfulness-awareness practices of the Shambhala Buddhist tradition.

This program, designed for both beginning meditators and persons wishing to deepen their meditation experience, will include:

- Group sitting meditation and walking meditation
- Movement exercises
- Private interviews with qualified meditation instructors
- Talks and contemplation
- Short daily work sessions
- Oryoki (meditative-style) meals
- Alternating periods of silence and functional talking

Everyone interested is encouraged to attend the whole dathün; however, anyone is welcome to come for one, two or three weeks.

Pacific Northwest Winter Dathun :**FEES (AND CORRESPONDING DATES):**

Whole dathun (Dec 6 - Jan 3): \$1,150 CAD

Three weeks (Dec 6 - 27, or Dec 13 - Jan 3): \$900 CAD

Two weeks (Dec 6 - 20, Dec 13 - 27, or Dec 20 - Jan 3): \$650 CAD

One week (Dec 6 - 13, Dec 13 - 20, or Dec 20 - 27): \$385 CAD

AVAILABLE DISCOUNTS:

For seniors (at least 60 years of age) and full-time students: 5%

For registrants who pay in full by October 1, 2008: 5%

For further information please go to:

http://nelson.shambhala.org/program_details.php?id=16527&cid=194

or contact the Dathun Coordinator, Maria Stella, at mariaostella@gmail.com or 510-879-7999.

DEPENDENT CO-ARISING RETREAT WITH THANISSARO BHIKKHU, SEPTEMBER 6-7

Joe Hebert, BIMS Group

Bellingham Insight Meditation Society hosted nearly sixty retreatants for this year's biennial visit from Theravada monk and Buddhist scholar Ajaan Thanissaro (Geoffrey DeGraff) at the Red Cedar Dharma Hall. The topic for the two-day non-residential study course was what the Buddha himself considered one of his most difficult to comprehend teachings: dependent co-arising, also known as dependant origination.

Ajaan Geoff offered teachings from 9:00 Am to 5:00 PM both Saturday and Sunday, which covered a wide range of topics on the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path. Using a sixteen-page study guide employing his own translations of the relevant Pali suttas, he detailed the Buddhist concept of the twelve-link chain of causation—how our ignorance leads to an endless cycle of craving, clinging, stress, birth, aging and death. Ajaan Geoff not only discussed and explained the chain of causation, but also encouraged his students, in their practice, to start with any link in the chain of dependant origination which with they feel confident and break the cycle there.

He gave very clear directions and many practical methods for doing so through articulate discussion of the suttas, his own commentary, and by answering questions from participating students. Ajaan Geoff is the abbot of the Metta Forest Monastery, north of San Diego, where he is currently training eight monks. He has translated both ancient Pali suttas and many modern Thai Buddhist works into English. As always, he brought dozens of free books of his translations and commentaries. You can find many of his texts in the Red Cedar Dharma Hall library.

We are extremely fortunate to have such an extraordinary person travel to Bellingham and teach us the Dhamma. Ajaan Thanissaro expects to return in the fall of 2010.



BELLINGHAM DHARMA ASSOCIATION BOARD REPORT

The Board of Directors has not met for a few months, but as we go to press we have a meeting scheduled for October 2. Now that our member Sanghas' transition to their new locations is complete, many of our Sangha representatives have chosen not to continue serving on the Association board. The new, more compact board of directors includes Karen FitzGerald, serving as chairperson, John Keith vice chair, Caroline Kingsbury secretary, and Tim Burnett treasurer.

In the near future we will be expanding the board of directors again, looking for people who are interested in spearheading projects and events. Ideas that have been recently offered are a film series, mahasangha potlucks, involvement with the Interfaith council, family and women's Dharma programs, hospital and hospice work, a speakers panel, art shows, poetry readings, comedy nights, hosting out of town presenters, non-denominational sats, and retreat scholarships. Or bring your own inspirations. If you are interested in possibly serving on the Board of Directors, or volunteering in another capacity, please contact any of the four current board members. Board contact information is listed on page 7.

BELLINGHAM DHARMA ON THE WEB

www.bellinghamdharma.org

Zen—www.bellinghamzen.org

Insight—www.bellinghaminsight.org

Mindfulness—www.bellinghammindfulness.org

Shambhala—www.bellinghamshambhala.org

THE DHAMMAPADA—THE PATH OF DHAMMA

Yamakavagga—Pairs—verses 1-6

Translated from the Pali by Thanissaro Bhikkhu

Phenomena are preceded by the heart,
ruled by the heart,
made of the heart.

If you speak or act
with a corrupted heart,
then suffering follows you —
as the wheel of the cart,
the track of the ox
that pulls it.

Phenomena are preceded by the heart,
ruled by the heart,
made of the heart.

If you speak or act
with a calm, bright heart,
then happiness follows you,
like a shadow
that never leaves.

'He insulted me,
hit me,
beat me,
robbed me'

— for those who brood on this,
hostility isn't stilled.

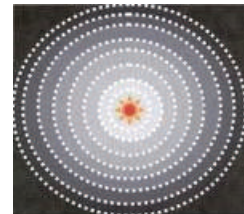
'He insulted me,
hit me,
beat me,
robbed me' —
for those who don't brood on this,
hostility is stilled.

Hostilities aren't stilled
through hostility,
regardless.

Hostilities are stilled
through non-hostility:

this, an unending truth.

Unlike those who don't realize
that we're here on the verge
of perishing,
those who do:
their quarrels are stilled.



Dharma Association Board of Directors

Karen FitzGerald (Chair)
360-675-5727
karen@karenfitzgerald.com

John Keith (Vice Chair)
676-6068
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Tim Burnett (Treasurer)
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Contribute to the Newsletter

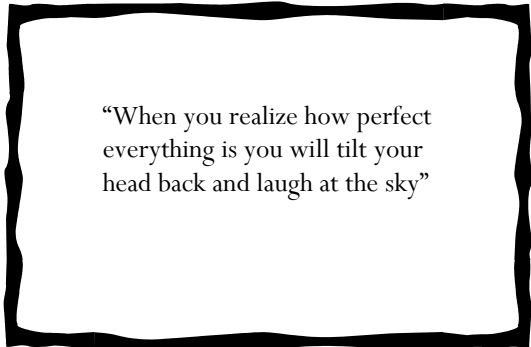
We love submissions from our Dharma Hall members.

Do you write poetry? Would you like to share your experience with the dharma? Do you like to read books or watch movies about Buddhism and meditation? Send your creative writing, essays, book and movie reviews to our editor to be added into the newsletter. All contributions or suggestions will be appreciated.

**Get on the
Dharma Hall Announcement
E-mail List!**

Send an e-mail to:
Karen@KarenFitzgerald.com

Ask to be added.



“When you realize how perfect everything is you will tilt your head back and laugh at the sky”

THE BELLINGHAM DHARMA ASSOCIATION WAS
FOUNDED BY FOUR BUDDHIST GROUPS IN 1993
TO SUPPORT BUDDHIST PRACTICE

MEDITATION INSTRUCTION AND CLASSES ARE
OFFERED BY QUALIFIED TEACHERS AND SENIOR
STUDENTS IN OUR FOUR DIFFERENT BUDDHIST
TRADITIONS

The Bellingham Meditation Newsletter

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Current Quarterly issue:

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Winter Submission Deadline:
December 15, 2008

Please send all submissions or suggestions to:
Karen Sheldon karen.sheldon@gmail.com
360-647-8414

Bellingham Dharma News Subscription Information Form

Please let us know how you would like to receive your newsletter:

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What is your primary affiliation with our organization? (e.g. Shambhala, Insight, Mindfulness, Zen, Morning Sit, Independent, Fifth Precept group, BPF, none) _____

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Mail to: Bellingham Dharma Association, P.O. Box 5193, Bellingham, WA 98227 (attn: Newsletter)

OR

E-mail your information to: karen@karenfitzgerald.com

Please consider a \$5 donation to cover the cost of sending four seasonal newsletters.

Bellingham Dharma Association

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