

Greetings, !

Welcome to KCC's August Newsletter. This month, we focus on the value of going on retreat. Teacher Zopa Herron shares her insights and sangha member, Cynthia Irvine, offers her perspective on her recent retreat. We are also proud to continue featuring beautiful thankgas from Sanje Elliott's collection and to remind you of KCC's main fundraising event for the year—a sit-a-thon coming up on September 3.

We hope you benefit from this issue, and continue to suggest story ideas and ways we can improve this offering.

With Gratitude

By Jennifer Cox

This month KCC wants to acknowledge the **Tech Team** also known as the **Fabulous Five**: Margaret Jansen, Peter Wood, Luisa Zini, Barbara Miller, Jacob Skye as well as Sandy Pollock, who has taken a big role on the team.

Since last July, the Tech Team has been studying which technology systems would help KCC to bring our programs in line with our growth. They have done a fabulous job, brainstorming, comparing and alas! we have landed on a plan AND new software to upgrade KCC's backend systems. Thanks to all of you for sticking with it until a solution was found.

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Linda Besant,
Rosemarie Sweet, and
Ryan Fitz contributed to the
production of this newsletter.

Why Go On Retreat: Zopa Shares Some Thoughts

By Deborah Brink Wöhrmann

Why is it worth the time and effort to go on retreat?

"Retreat accelerates the opportunity to wake up completely," says Zopa Herron, one of KCC's assistant teachers. "On retreat we step out of our habits, daily routine and rituals of our home—even those we're not aware of."

There is a different schedule, food is provided, "and silence if you're lucky," she says. "You meet your own self in a new way. Retreat makes this possible."

"Retreat allows you to leave problems at home, though we can learn a lot about ourselves when we obsess on what we've left behind. We can see what is our work."

"At every retreat I've been to I've found some gem, some insight into how my mind works. We're not retreating from the world, but from our mental and emotional habit-patterns. As we make some space, we get to see them clearly with compassion. That's where the gems are."

Zopa emphasizes that the texts say we must seek seclusion at least some part of our lives in order to awaken. This alone time can be an hour, a weekend or years. She has had the opportunity to sit the One Year Retreat at SCOL, after having lived for six years at the Sravasti Abbey in Northeast Washington. Altogether, she has lived three years in retreat.

How can one prepare for a successful retreat?

Zopa offers three guiding suggestions for preparing for a successful retreat:

1. Choose with awareness. Consider your own experiences, and check out the teacher to be sure he or she is "authentic"—meaning that you can know who their teachers are and can trace them back to the Buddha.
2. Be kind to those you are leaving behind. Begin early (six months in advance) to prepare them for your departure. Involve them in your plans, answering any questions they might have, and leave clear contact information so they know how to find you in case of an emergency. "Then your mind is more at peace."
3. Take it seriously. Cherish the opportunity. Use time well, yet be relaxed. "The effects of retreat will last. You don't know how or what: Let it unfold," she says.

And, "don't bring your consumer mind to retreat. Don't ask what you're going to get."

How important is the "content" of a retreat? What about a personal retreat?

"Look at your own practice, and look at how you like to encourage yourself in your practice," Zopa says. "Be aware of your experiences. A personal retreat is a higher level of practice and can be of great benefit to someone who has already sat other retreats and has benefited from the guidance of teachers and sanghas." A group retreat provides a teacher's guidance along with a sangha's support.

"The other retreatants are helping you - getting up at 5:00 in the morning is much easier when others are doing it too." She reminds us, "Whoever we

hang around we tend to become. We're social beings and copy what people around us are doing."

"When good conditions are set up—schedule, silence—our demons can show up. In group retreat, we get guidance from a teacher and then often can meet with a teacher one-on-one. The beauty of a teacher is that you have a guide and someone who can help you to turn a corner when stuck or confused."

What about cost?

KCC offers scholarships to those unable to pay the full cost of a retreat. Zopa says that, when she could not afford the cost of retreat, she would sometimes send letters to friends, asking for support. In these letters she would explain the benefits of retreat and her reasons for wanting to go. "Most of the people who supported me weren't Buddhist," she recalls.

She encourages people to ask for generosity from friends and family. "Don't think 'I can't go.'"

Reminder: KCC is also seeking donations to support the scholarship fund that allows all people interested to attend retreat.

How One Sangha Member Benefited from the Recent Chenrezig Retreat: An Interview with Cynthia Irvine

By Deborah Brink Wöhrmann

Cynthia Irvine was one of the lucky ones who attended the week-long Chenrezig Retreat in late June—and she did not regret her time at the Ananda Center at Laurelwood. She was not sure what she would learn, "but I hoped to become wiser and better able to remember my true nature."

"I chose this retreat because Chenrezig practice sometimes feels mechanical to me and at other times it opens me to a deep sense of compassion both within myself and from the world. Having previously experienced Bill's teaching, I trusted that he would help me connect to this practice more fully."

Cynthia, a longtime KCC member, says the retreat was both helpful and delightful. "Delightful because it was in a beautiful location with yummy food (I didn't have to cook) and I had hours every day to devote to meditation. Helpful because Bill and Dora both are so experienced and wise."

Though nothing "surprised" her, she was struck by how much time was devoted to shamatha practice. "I think all of us on the retreat felt the strong connection between practicing calm abiding without an object and the ability to visualize and feel the presence of Chenrezig."

Two years ago, Cynthia remembers going backpacking and bringing her scribbled Chenrezig notes with her in order to practice. "After this retreat, I can practice without the text." In fact, she recently did an entire practice while waiting in a parking lot at a strip mall off Interstate-5.

"Bill had a way of weaving Chenrezig into all the meditations we did, and he encouraged us to memorize it so it is portable. Previously I had worried about having all the words perfect, but after the retreat I felt freed up to focus more on the meaning of the text (and doing so, paradoxically, I have now memorized it)," she shares.

The practice of Chenrezig can encompass all senses and the imagination. It is an invitation toward more compassionate being. "Viewing the sounds we hear as Chenrezig's mantra; seeing others as Chenrezig; remembering that I am Chenrezig; all this brings me solace and makes me better able to endure discomforts and be kinder with my actions and words towards others. I am happier, and I hope, those I encounter are too."

For Cynthia, the practice became immediately beneficial in a very real way. "It was incredibly powerful to do the Chenrezig retreat and to have two friends pass away in the next week... I could see clearly how visualizing Chenrezig and later dissolving that visualization mirrors the process of human birth and death. And having practiced Chenrezig, it made the loss less jarring."

Featured Thankga: Vajradhara

By Sanje Elliott

Tilopa was the first human in the Kagyu lineage. He lived 988- 1069 in Bengal, India. His parents were Brahmins, and thus he started out as a Hindu. But after practicing and wandering for several years, he found a group of Buddhist monks who were renunciates and took up their practice.

Although he received teachings from many great masters of the period, it is said that his inner vision allowed him to receive teachings directly from the Adi Buddha, Vajradhara and, specifically the teachings of Mahamudra, which was to become one of the pillars of Kagyu practice. He also received many transmissions from visionary beings called dakinis.

In order to sustain himself, Tilopa became a sesame seed pounder, one who pounds sesame seeds to make oil. The word for that is Tillipa. His guru, Matangi, instructed him to work in a brothel for Dharima, a prostitute in Bengal, and he consequently received great mahamudra realization from that experience.

He was also known for living along a riverbank, eating primarily fish. One story tells of devout Buddhist monks who chastised him for eating fish since they were vegetarian. To prove that he had not created bad karma by killing the fish, he took the bones from his supper and threw them into the river, and as they landed, they resumed their life and former bodies, and swam away freely to the astonishment of his detractors.

Among his many students were Lalitavajra and Naropa, who was to become the next in the lineage of Kagyu masters. The thangka of Tilopa was painted by Taja, the master painter from Rumtek Monastery, sometime in the 20th century.



Sit For Mindfulness

By Jennifer Cox

Hosted by Kagyu Chang Chub Chuling (KCC) a Tibetan Buddhist center. kcc.org

Learn and practice
some basics of
mindfulness meditation

A fun way to practice
with a group

Non-sectarian mindfulness
instruction given
throughout the day

Meditate for as long
as you want-
From 1 minute to 4hrs

A Sit for Mindfulness Grant Park

NE U.S. Grant Pl & NE 33rd Ave.
NW corner of the park

September 3rd
Saturday, 1-5pm

Gates open at 12:30

Celebration: 5pm-6pm

2016

ALL ARE WELCOME

Curious about meditation? Want to join others in a mindfulness meditation practice? From 1:00 to 5:00, there will be four sessions of mindfulness meditation. This is a time for everyone to come together for an afternoon of spacious attention.

Come for as long as you choose

Bring your own cushion, chair, or blanket to sit on

FREE

"Coming face to face with our feelings, we stabilize our awareness against habitual reactions. Examining mental phenomena nakedly, we sharpen our perceptions without becoming attached."

- B. Alan Wallace

When I first thought about this idea, my image was of hundreds of people sitting in a public place together meditating in a giant circle. The image itself felt so powerful to me that I wanted to see if KCC could make that happen.

And here we are with the event just weeks away! It seems so pertinent, with all of the tragedies, violence, politics and upheaval going on in the world right now. I cannot think of a better way to bring peace into action or for a Buddhist center to be a part of social action. The most powerful expression comes from a place of compassion. It starts with ourselves. It starts with coming together as a large community, being inclusive and mindful.

This is also KCC's biggest fundraiser of the year!
August is the time to gather donations and build excitement!

On September 3rd, we will sit together in Grant Park surrounded by a circle of trees. When we found the place, it was clear that this was meant to be.

See you on Saturday, September 3rd—a wonderful day to come together for mindfulness practice and to show our love for KCC.

If you want info on sitting for donations or wish to volunteer, please contact: Jennifer at jcox@gmail.com

Cleaning Day - Thank You Everyone!



KCC's urban center sparkles these days, following a frenzy of dusting, scrubbing and mopping every nook and cranny on July 16th. Phuntsok and Zopa organized

everything and provided yummy snacks. Many thanks to Ales Pokorny, Susan Giese, Ryan Fitz, Sally Mead, Bob Wilson, Denis DeCoursey, Diane Lucas, Makiko Oki, Linda Besant and Pat Parker for pitching in.

August Events

Upcoming events at KCC include some new and some continuing opportunities, but please note the Thursday evening Mind Training Study Group is taking a break. Keep a watch on the website, www.kcc.org, for updates. For now, here is what is happening:

All events are at KCC Urban Center unless otherwise noted.

Young Adult Group

This monthly meeting welcomes the under-40 set to gather and talk about the dharma as it relates to daily life.

Friday, August 5, 2016 - 7:00pm to 9:00pm

Friday, September 2, 2016 - 7:00pm to 9:00pm

Painting at the Land of Retreat

The second and third summer painting classes hosted by KCC at SCOL, where participants will spend the day painting high desert prairie, arid brushland, and pine and oak savannah landscapes under the guidance of highly-reputed plein air artists and instructors.

Jef Gunn will lead this class. Visit the [painting series website](#) for dates and details about subsequent classes.

Saturday, August 6, 2016

Ser Chö Ösel Ling

REGISTER

All-Day Sit: Chenrezig

Resident Lama Michael Conklin provides detailed instruction on the practice of Chenrezig on alternating first Sundays from 9:00am to noon. Following a potluck lunch, there is a question-and-answer session from 1:30pm to 2:45pm, and then a last session of meditation ending at 4:00pm

Sunday, August 7, 2016 - 9:00am to 4:00pm

Newcomers' Night

This is a great opportunity to stop by KCC, ask questions, and get acquainted with the community, as well as the ways of Tibetan Buddhism

as practiced at KCC. If you are new or sort of new or just want the chance to be reintroduced to KCC, please stop by.

Thursday, August 18, 2016 - 7:30pm to 9:30pm

Discovering Awareness—Relaxing in the Solace of the Three Solitudes

This retreat will focus on honing calm-abiding practice by observing the three solitudes of body, speech and mind. The emphasis will be on meditation and contemplation with daily opportunities to address questions. Participants will have the option of having several brief, practice-oriented interviews with the retreat leader.

Saturday, August 20 - 4:00pm — Sunday, August 28 - 11:00am

Led by Lama Eric Triebelhorn

Ananda at Laurelwood Retreat Center

REGISTER

Board of Directors Meeting

Sunday, August 21, 2016 - 1:30pm to 4:30pm

For more events, **[view the KCC calendar.](#)**

Streaming

KCC has begun streaming on YouTube, at this URL:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/kccmedia>

[View this message in your web browser.](#)

[Click here](#) to unsubscribe from KCC's e-newsletter.

Our mailing address is:

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Portland, OR 97212
United States

Greetings, !

We hope you enjoy this packed September edition of the KCC e-newsletter. We strive to include a mix of news and updates, and more reflective pieces. The newsletter includes notices of important events and reports on both our Sit For Mindfulness fundraiser and the recent week-long retreat taught by Lama Eric Triebelhorn.

In addition, we continue our Thangka series, with Sanje's Elliott's curation, and include a reflection on personal interviews. May this issue be of benefit to you. We look forward to your story ideas and suggestions for improvement.

Ringu Tulku Rinpoche—Save the Dates!
NOVEMBER 25—27, 2016

Mark your calendars and plan to join KCC for a very special post-Thanksgiving weekend with Ringu Tulku Rinpoche!

On Friday evening (November 25) Rinpoche will discuss Buddhist approaches to working with emotions, including ways to release and transform emotions to reveal our innate wisdom.

The program for Saturday and Sunday (November 26—27) will cover the union of relative and ultimate bodhicitta, or, in other words, the union of profound compassion and deep insight.

Complete program details will be announced when confirmed.

[Read more about Ringu Tulku Rinpoche.](#)



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Linda Besant,
Deborah Brink Wöhrmann,
Abby Cummings,
Sanje Elliott,
Cynthia Irvine,
Mary Woods,
Rosemarie Sweet, and
Ryan Fitz contributed to the
production of this newsletter.

Personal Interviews: One Practitioner's Recommendations

By Cynthia Irvine

You never know what will come from having an interview with a teacher. For instance, I am writing this article because I met with Bill, and he requested that I help out in this way. I have often felt I did not know enough and did not practice with enough focus to “waste” a teacher's precious time. But slowly I have gained confidence that my questions are good enough. And seeing the vast benefits I have gained, I would like to encourage other people to have interviews.

I cannot remember why I first requested to meet privately with a teacher; I think it was because I was desperate. After several years of attempting to meditate, I felt like a failure because my mind wandered regularly. It still wanders regularly, but now with proper guidance and compassion my practice feels totally workable and joyous.

Get yourself a notebook. Bring it on Sundays and jot down things that are interesting, surprising or confusing. Take notes when you read. What don't you understand? Make note of your daily habits and emotions. Since the dharma guides us through all aspects of life, there is truly nothing you cannot bring to an interview (at least, so far nobody has ever rejected my queries, whether they be about dealing with anger or trying to understand Chenrezig). When I have a handful of questions, I set up an interview. Do not be intimidated by the people who are chatting effortlessly with the teachers... you can talk to them too. And if you can squeak out the words “can I come see you?” they know what to do.

And yes, you may be scared before the actual meeting. Julia King-Tamang once explained that this fear is normal, as nothing is more meaningful and makes us more vulnerable than our spiritual life. Preparation for an interview can be a fascinating way to learn more about one's neuroses. I love bringing different things as dana, and watching how my mind worries about these acts of generosity. Of course, dana can be something monetary, something homemade or homegrown, or it can be something that is important to you. It can be part of building a relationship with a teacher.

When I meet with a teacher, I do not always ask the questions I prepared. So it is good not to feel you have to have it “figured out” before you arrive. Just go and cry if you have to. Some people have told me, “Oh, I thought about having an interview, but then I figured I could answer my own questions.” Perhaps this is because so many “answers” are there on the internet. Or maybe it is because we are taught that contemplation of what we learn is important (and of course, it IS.) However, I can look up how to do hand mudras on the internet, but I won't remember them until they are taught by someone I revere.

By bringing a teacher a question, we learn unexpected things that we never could realize on our own. And by building a connection with a teacher, we also have an opportunity to watch compassion in action. The Kagyu tradition places a great emphasis on devotion, a concept that I have always been squeamish about. But, the more I meet with the teachers at KCC (and yes, I have met with several teachers... there is no need to just meet with one), the more devotion grows naturally in me.

These teachers are committed to being kind. To helping. And to being fearless in their pursuit of wisdom. How could you not take this opportunity to be in their presence?

A Sit for Mindfulness—An Afternoon of Spacious Attention

By Linda Besant

The clouds parted for A Sit for Mindfulness at Grant Park on September 3rd after days of drizzle and downpour. Some 62 people, including 10 who were new to meditation or to KCC, spent a peaceful hour or two or four practicing together in the brisk, clean air. The thwack of tennis balls, the murmur of children at play, and the rustle of the breeze in the curtain that defined the site proved surprisingly spacious as objects of focus for calm abiding meditation.

Many thanks to Bill Spangle, Peter Wood and Jeff Alworth for their skillful meditation instruction; to all the volunteers who helped throughout the day; and to everyone who came out to sit even though the weather had been so wet. We hope our practice together will indeed contribute to the welfare of beings.



Thanks also to everyone who gathered donations to support KCC. Please know that the sangha is grateful for your efforts. Though it is challenging to ask for money, we trust that it is of benefit to our friends and neighbors to forge a connection to the Dharma through their generosity. As of September 5th, we know that A Sit for Mindfulness netted close to \$5,000. Many sitters have told us that they still have contributions to turn in. Please do so as soon as you can so we can celebrate the final total.

Jennifer Cox, Brooke Huffman, Celedra Gildea and Linda Besant were the organizing committee for A Sit for Mindfulness. From our perspective, it is a worthwhile event, valuable in particular because it is so firmly within KCC's mission, and because the afternoon itself provided such a lovely opportunity for us to practice together in the outdoors. We would appreciate input from all of you as we evaluate whether to do it again next year. Please send your thoughts to jcox@kcc.org.

Discovering Awareness Retreat—led by Lama Eric Triebelhorn

By Deborah Brink Wohrmann

Last month, Lama Eric Triebelhorn led Discovering Awareness, a packed eight-day retreat which focused on the practice of Shamatha—calm abiding. Weeks prior to its start date, the former KCC president sent out emails to participants in preparation: this retreat would be silent with no cell phones, no internet access, and no talking other than during the daily Q & A periods or in interviews. He requested that each participant show up prepared for the silence and plan to attend for the duration of the retreat.

"A tight container was meant to facilitate people being more able to settle into the retreat with fewer distractions," said Lama Eric. And, in fact, the retreat was silent (with several encouraging reminders along the way.)

Lama Eric was originally asked to lead a shorter Insight Retreat. But since this was the first public retreat he has led, he chose instead to focus on the practice of Shamatha—"foundational to all of our contemplative practices," he said. He felt better prepared for this focus and hoped it would support and inspire practice for retreatants.

"I wanted it to be for enough days so people could really settle in and perhaps meet with some obstacles and have time to work with those obstacles. I wanted it to be a full week of practice." Besides the focus on breath, sound, objects, thoughts and observation of the mind, relaxation was emphasized.



"Both in our daily lives and in our meditation in particular, we have a hard time really relaxing into the practice," he said. "So, a fair amount of effort was focused on getting this across to make this point: We need to relax."

He invited students to experiment with a variety of practices: "I felt the intensity of the sitting could be mitigated by having frequent breaks." The vast majority of the sits were no longer than twenty-five minutes with five-minute stretch breaks where people could stand, move around or even walk outside. "A little pain and discomfort can be an opportunity, but too much opportunity with pain can be a hindrance."

"I didn't want people to get tight mentally either, so I thought walking outside would be a way to open up and get a fresh perspective." He hoped this would be "less physically grueling" too.

During a final Q & A period, one student confessed that she had resisted the sessions of walking meditation. There were two each day, and she did not like them. But, she said, soon she began to see their value. She began to recognize how the walking sessions had an effect on the way she walked to her room and to meals. Heads nodded.

"The feedback has been quite positive," Lama Eric shared when asked about his experience leading this retreat. "Many people have reported that their Shamatha was sinking and had become quite dull and they weren't able to have much alertness in their practice. They feel they have some more tools they can use to pull themselves out of a rut they have fallen into—which is great to hear."

"It's always nice to return to Portland and the Northwest. I moved here in '95. Even though I've spent half the time since in India I really consider Portland my home. KCC was the first Dharma community I deeply plugged into so it's always nice to go back and see my dharma brothers and sisters."

In 2005, Lama Eric moved to India to take part in a Three Year Retreat with Khenpo Lodro Donyo Rinpoche. He now lives in Mirik at the Bokar Ngedon Chokhor Ling Monastery where his main job is teaching the young Bokar Rinpoche to speak English.

His recent trip to the United States was just over two months. From July 6-10, he joined the North American Kagyu Monlam and then attended teachings of Mingyur Rinpoche before visiting the Holy Karmapa's North American seat at KTD. From there, he went to visit family in Ohio for several weeks.

The Discovering Awareness Retreat took place at the Ananda Center at Laurelwood in Gaston, OR, August 20-28, 2016. One special student of the retreat was Lama Eric's mother, Caren Ewart.

Featured Thankga: Naropa

By Sanje Elliott

Naropa was born into a Brahmin family in 956; he died in 1041 in India. At the age of 20, he married a young Brahmin girl, but their marriage dissolved

when he was 28, and he entered the Buddhist University of Nalanda, where he practiced very hard and was renowned for his great scholarship. Eventually, he became the abbot of Nalanda, some four thousand student monks.

One day a dakini appeared before him and questioned him about his understanding of the Buddha's teachings. She was sad when he said he understood all that the Buddha had taught because she knew that her brother, Tilopa, was the only one who really understood the teachings. So Naropa left his position and studies at Nalanda, and set off to find Tilopa, suffering many hardships and difficulties before he finally gained realization of Mahamudra after twelve years with Tilopa. One of Naropa's greatest students was Marpa, who learned the six yogas of Naropa from him, and who also established the Kagyu order in Tibet.

Although Tilopa and Naropa look very similar in the thangkas painted of them, Tilopa holds his signature fish in his left hand, and Naropa holds a skull cup with amrit (nectar) in his left hand. This thangka of Naropa was painted by Taja of Rumtek monastery sometime in the 20th century.



KCC's Children's Program

By Mary Woods

We are pleased to announce that this year, KCC will again offer a program to share the dharma with children, ages 5-10. The schedule will be twice a month on the 2nd and 4th Sundays. We will begin September 25 and go through the second Sunday in June.

With the idea of enriching the program, we have made some changes. The children will gather in the beautiful Lama room upstairs for the first hour. This allows us to begin the class in a sacred space. Use of this space will help the children to engage in short practice sessions, dharma-based stories and to participate in simple compassion practices designed to increase awareness of loving-kindness and to provide ways to share this with others. To facilitate this, there will be one other adult upstairs helping the teacher, Mary Woods, to guide the children through these practices.

The second hour will be in the children's room as before and will be slightly less structured than the first hour. It will include a combination of the curriculum created by Julia King Tamang, art projects and play.

We have increased the number of children able to participate to eight. We now have a full class with several returning students and a few new ones.

I encourage any interested Sangha members to join us on Sundays. We hope that different people will come to read or tell a Dharma story and connect with young practitioners. This is a precious opportunity. I have been surprised at what I have learned during the time I have been with the children. It has been such a blessing.

Please consider spending time with us this year as we share the dharma with these younger members of KCC. If you have questions or are interested in helping, please contact [Mary Woods](#) or the Children's Program advisor, [Zopa Herron](#) (e-mail addresses linked here).

Kids Visit SCOL

By Abby Cummings

On August 13th, the KCC kids program visited SCOL for a day of connection and building bird boxes. Making the trip to our retreat land were three children and two parents from the program, as well as Sangha members Adele Hilsen, Mary Woods, Susan Giese, John Jennings, and Zopa Herron. SCOL staffer Peg Swift also stopped by.

It was a hot day. The group worked in the shade of the old barn, which is a cooler-temperature hideout for the land's deer as well. Assembling the bird boxes was the day's main focus, and Mary Woods also brought Buddhist-themed drawings for the kids to color and leave with the retreatants. The cedar for the boxes was donated by Greg Kust, an SCOL volunteer. In the weeks before the event, I cut them to dimension and prepared them for assembly by the children.

Birder and board member, John Jennings, gave a brief presentation of the boxes in the barn's wood shop, explaining the significance of the land stewardship program at SCOL. In the five to six years he has been helping with the bird boxes, John says he's seen a "steady increase" in the number

of Western blue birds on site, and was impressed by the ease with which the kids took to the tools and the task.

After assembling three boxes, the group took a walk up the gravel road to the orchard and hung them. The kids even got to see blue birds in some of the boxes!

The group also spent more time walking and talking about how Sangha volunteers take care of the land and the beings who inhabit it. Everyone gathered for a potluck at the creek house, and all basked in the labor of their good work.



Welcome Anthony Kimple

Anthony Kimple, a long-time KCC Sangha member, has joined the staff at SCOL. His duties there include cooking and facilities/land stewardship assistance. In the twenty years that Anthony has been part of the Sangha, he has seen enormous growth in the size of the community and the variety of its programs.

Anthony has completed a one-year retreat, as well as other shorter retreats. “One-year retreat was incredibly difficult and probably the best thing I’ve done in this life. I aspire to do more,” he said. He has also volunteered at SCOL over the years. When



asked what motivated him to join the staff, he replied that he wants to support long retreat. He noted that Peg, Marie, Abby, and Jake have created a very supportive and relaxed environment which quickly put him at ease about his choice to live and work at SCOL. (Full SCOL staff are pictured here: Jake, Peg, Abby, Marie and Anthony).

Welcome, Anthony. May you and all beings benefit from your service.

Events in September and Early October

Upcoming events at KCC include some new and some continuing opportunities. but please note the Thursday evening Mind Training Study Group is taking a break. Keep a watch on the website, www.kcc.org, for updates. For now, here is what is happening:

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Newcomers' Night

This is a great opportunity to stop by KCC, ask questions, and get acquainted with the community, as well as the ways of Tibetan Buddhism as practiced at KCC. If you are new or sort of new or just want the chance to be reintroduced to KCC, please stop by.

Thursday, September 15, 2016 - 7:30pm to 9:30pm

2016 Bokar International Yidam Seminar

The Yidam Seminar established by Bokar Rinpoche will be held in Tainan, Taiwan, directly following a 3-day Kagyu Monlam presided over by Khenpo Rinpoche. More details at the [KCC website](http://www.kcc.org).

Thursday, September 15 to Wednesday, September 28, 2016
Tainan and Taipei, Taiwan

Painting At the Land of Retreat

The fourth and final summer painting class hosted by KCC at SCOL, where participants will spend the day painting high desert prairie, arid brushland, and pine and oak savannah landscapes under the guidance of highly-reputed plein air artist Phyllis Trowbridge.

Visit the [painting series website](http://www.kcc.org) for more details.

Saturday, September 17, 2016
Ser Chö Ösel Ling

REGISTER

Board of Directors Meeting

Sunday, September 18, 2016 - 1:30pm to 4:30pm

KCC Mind Training Group

The biweekly Thursday KCC Mind Training Group resumes this month, with Tim Campbell and Zopa Herron co-leading an exploration of the

entire Lojong, or Mind Training tradition, including the Seven Points and beyond.

Thursday, September 22, 2016 - 7:00pm to 9:00pm

All-Day Sit: Chenrezig

Resident Lama Michael Conklin provides detailed instruction on the practice of Chenrezig on alternating first Sundays from 9:00am to noon. Following a potluck lunch, there is a question-and-answer session from 1:30pm to 2:45pm, and then a last session of meditation ending at 4:00pm

Sunday, October 2, 2016 - 9:00am to 4:00pm

Death and Dying Seminar

Eight classes to be held on consecutive Sundays at Heart of Wisdom Zen Temple, beginning in October. Participants are not required to attend every session. Details and a description will be posted on the KCC website soon.

Sunday, October 2, 2016 - 3:30pm to 5:30pm (first of eight Sunday sessions through November 20, 2016)

Heart of Wisdom Zen Temple

Led by Chozen Bays (co-abbot and co-founder of Great Vow Zen Monastery and Heart of Wisdom Zen Temple), and by Erik Fromme
Co-taught by Mary Woods and David McWherter

Young Adult Group

This monthly meeting welcomes the under-40 set to gather and talk about the dharma as it relates to daily life.

Friday, October 7, 2016 - 7:00pm to 9:00pm

Mandala Practice: Holding the World in the Palm of Your Hand and Letting Go— Invigorating Your Practice In the Mahamudra Program - Class Four

The fourth and final class in this Mahamudra Program support series, this event will include a prepared teaching on the Mandala practice, Mandala group practice together (rice and mandala set-ups included), an opportunity to share experiences in community, and a ngondro and mahamudra question and answer session.

Saturday, October 8 - 9:00am to 12:00pm

Led by Erik Fromme and Bill Spangle

For more events, **[view the KCC calendar.](#)**

Streaming

KCC now streams most events on YouTube at this URL:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/kccmedia>

[View this message in your web browser.](#)

[Click here](#) to unsubscribe from KCC's e-newsletter.

Our mailing address is:

73 NE Monroe Street
Portland, OR 97212
United States

Greetings, !

We have historic news to report in this issue - KCC has entered into an agreement to purchase a new urban center for the Sangha. While there are still contingencies on obtaining final ownership, this is truly a remarkable milestone in a 17-year-long effort.

At the same time, KCC is fortunate to be hosting a multi-day visit with esteemed Ringu Tulku Rinpoche in late November. Please read about the teachings he will be offering and consider attending.

Also included in this issue are a recap of the innovative painting fundraiser at SCOL, an update on its Fuel Reduction Program and news from our bookstore. But the newsletter would not be complete without an offer of gratitude for a year full of inspiring teachings and retreats. May you enjoy this newsletter and the transition to a new season.

With Gratitude

By Jennifer Cox

This month KCC gives boundless gratitude to the program council, teachers, guest teachers, and sangha members moved to bring dharma groups together.

As summer turns into shorter crisper autumn days, it feels like a chance to pause and look back on the abundance of teachings, retreats and classes KCC has brought to the sangha this year. Every month this year, there has been either a class series, a week-long retreat, a study group, or all of the above. This has been a year filled with juicy practice opportunities. The teachers have had their hands full in creating the 2016 schedule and they deserve boundless gratitude for the extensive time

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Jennifer Cox,
John Jennings, Diane
Lucas,
Rosemarie Sweet, and
Ryan Fitz contributed to the
production of this newsletter.

and care they gave to giving us year-round dharma opportunities!

A big thank-you to: Lama Michael, Bill Spangle, Dora Decoursey, Zopa Herron, Erik Fromme, Jeff and Sally Alworth, Julie Hurlocker, Eric Treibelhorn, Tim Campbell, and Holly Hisamoto.

Thank you all for a wonderful year of learning!

The Search For a New Urban Center: One Giant Step Forward

By John Jennings

The KCC New Urban Center Committee is happy to report that KCC made an offer on the church at 4936 NE Skidmore and the owner has accepted it! It was a very intense few days after the seller told us the current tenants were not going to buy the church and that he was going on vacation in a few days. Luckily, we were already planning to prepare an offer to serve as a back-up, anticipating that the tenants would back out. We also have Dora, who tirelessly worked with committee comments



and review by KCC's lawyer, Bruce Howell, and negotiated final details with the seller's lawyer, literally right up to the night before her departure for Taiwan for Yidam retreat. KCC Board Chair, Tim Campbell, also went out of his way during a time when his work had critical deadlines to meet. He made himself available to review and sign documents and communicate with the Board and Lama Michael. Mark Eichstaedt and Phil Wallin played key roles as well.

While everyone, including the Board and Lama Michael, is very excited about this, it is important to remember that it is not a done deal until we finally close on the sale after our due diligence period. However, Lama Michael says "this particular deal looks like it could be a winner for both the buyer and seller; so if the deal goes through it looks now like there will only be winners." There is a decent chance that the sale will be consummated in the next few months, depending on how long due diligence really takes.



Due diligence is a period designed to allow buyers of a building to inspect it to make sure it really meets their needs and has no hidden flaws or insurmountable challenges. Under our sale agreement, we have up to 55 working days to do this, which puts the closing date, at the latest, near the end of November. At that point, if all our contingencies are met and the condition of the building is deemed acceptable to us, we hand over the remaining funds owed to close the deal. Then reality sets in and we begin some anticipated repairs and cleaning and minor alterations before we can

actually move in. At that time, we will begin the process to sell Monroe Street and move out. Funding and volunteers will be needed for cleaning, painting and making minor repairs. In the future, additional funding will be needed for more major alterations to enhance the space.

This is an historic moment for our Sangha. At long last, we are within reach of an urban center with room to practice, room for programs and workshops, room for visiting teachers, room for a growing sangha. The good news is that with the resources we already



have - Monroe Street, existing donations, bridge loans from members - we are close to being able to cover the purchase price. AND the really important news is this: at this very moment, we need every sangha member to make a special effort to seriously consider what they can contribute, so that we will be able to pay for the improvements we must make to the Skidmore property before we move in. It makes sense to do as many projects as we can before we move in so we do not have to sit in a construction site. If you have been

waiting until there is an actual building project to make a contribution, now is the time.

So, for now the status is SALE PENDING. You will be hearing from the Board and volunteers over the next two months as the purchase and estimate for repairs take shape.

Ringu Tulku Rinpoche—DATE CHANGE

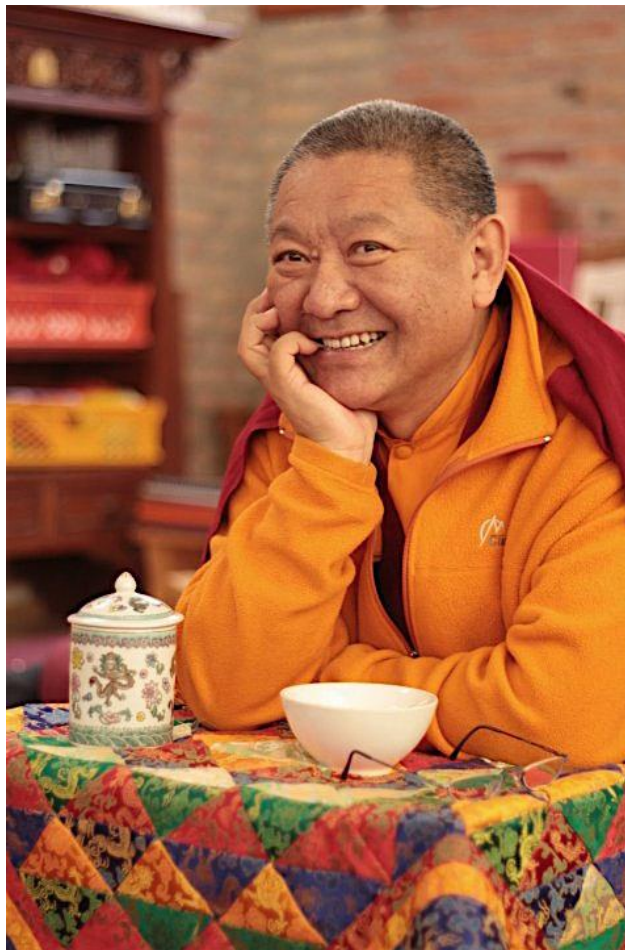
November 26—27: Teachings in Downtown Portland

November 28—29: Additional Events to Be Announced

Recent changes to Ringu Tulku Rinpoche's schedule have resulted in changes to the event schedule for his KCC-sponsored Portland teachings. Please update your calendar.

On Saturday evening (November 26), Rinpoche will discuss Buddhist approaches to working with emotions including ways to release and transform emotions to reveal our innate wisdom. The teachings will touch on how to observe habitual tendencies as they arise and become aware of their origin and their impact on ourselves and others. It will also address how to use this awareness as a foundation for transforming emotions and gaining insight into our innate wisdom nature.

The program for Sunday (November 27) will cover the union of relative and ultimate bodhicitta, or, in other words, the union of profound compassion and deep insight. The relationship between cultivating tranquility and insight through meditation and developing compassion can at times seem paradoxical. Sitting alone in meditation practice can feel very self contained, perhaps even selfish. How can this be connected to compassion? On the other side, the prospect of developing compassion for all beings can be overwhelming. How can this lead us toward freedom? This weekend teaching will address how the Buddhist practice integrates these two aspects of the path. Ringu Tulku introduces this in his book “Confusion Arises As Wisdom”:



“Bodhichitta brings wisdom and compassion together. One way this happens is that as our compassion grows, our self-centeredness lessens. With less self-absorption, our attachment and aversion decrease as well. The less attachment and aversion we have, the more our wisdom grows. In this way, compassion leads to wisdom.

It can also go the other way—wisdom leads to compassion. Wisdom is the direct experience of the true nature of our mind and our world. As our understanding becomes stronger, we become more fearless. As we become more fearless, we become less self-centered. This leads to less aversion and attachment, and this makes us more compassionate.”

There are tentative plans for Monday and Tuesday morning (November 28-29) in Portland, including a Monday evening discussion period when Rinpoche may address topics such as Chenrezig and Mind Training. On Tuesday afternoon, Rinpoche will be driven to SCOL to spend two days with our Three-Year Retreatants and the SCOL staff.

Complete program details will be announced when confirmed.

[Read more about Ringu Tulku Rinpoche.](#)

Painting At the Land of Retreat—A Recap

By Jennifer Cox

Pulling off a non-dharma fundraising series for a dharma center, I knew was a bit of a gamble when the idea began. But it was an idea I was willing to test. The thought stemmed from my personal desire to connect more with the SCOL land. Given that I have a long yet rusty relationship with painting, it seemed like a perfect way to take in the beauty while bringing in people to enjoy the land. I immediately went to Jef Gunn, one of KCC’s seasoned landscape painters, to ask him for his thoughts. A cup of tea and half a sandwich later, I had a list of artists, a plan in place, and Jef on board to teach not one but two classes out of the four-part landscape painting series out at SCOL.

The June class ended up being cancelled. By July’s class, which was open to all skill levels, the series began. Sangha members who never painted came as well as people from the landscape painting community. The day was hot, but there was shade and the beginning painters were in good hands with Jef as an instructor.



All three classes, two led by Jef Gunn and and one led by Phyllis Trowbridge, brought similar tones. Everyone had a wonderful time and was happy with their paintings. The connections with sangha members and painters were warming to the heart. There was a lot of laughter and a slow-moving wandering stillness. These classes were moments where a group came together to listen to the land, to observe and truly watch what was happening around them. Such interesting things happen when you sit in one place for hours and hours and let yourself sink in. Your body calms, your mind calms and you get to really see what is happening around you without doing anything. Similar to what any dharma practitioner understands. A deeper connection to where you are becomes clear and noticeable. This was what the series brought: deeper connections, deeper roots.

Bringing people out to the land connected the group to SCOL. It also connected SCOL to the Sangha. Peg, Jake, Abby and Marie were all so happy to have people out there. Marie, who is an artist herself, was thrilled to have a day to dedicate to art. These were days of important connections.

Stewarding the Land at SCOL

By Rosemarie Sweet

As Peg Swift stated in an article early this year, KCC and its staff have two primary responsibilities at SCOL. Its central duty is to be a supportive container for the Three-Year Retreatants. But KCC is also a steward for 240 acres of land, where it nurtures the lives of numerous beings, human and non-human.

In its stewardship role, KCC is a partner with the Washington Department of Natural Resource in a Fuel Reduction Plan, a cost share arrangement where the state pays half of the expenses for the work. We first reported on this partnership in [January](#)



[2016](#). This program aims to reduce the risk of fire while improving the health of the trees. Beginning in November 2015 and ending in May 2017, it is focused on the 15 acres near the north egress road. This site was chosen in order to improve the chances that fire will not reach the road. SCOL staffer Jake Cummings is leading this effort.

Goldendale has been in a seven-year long drought. This has made it easier for Ips pine beetles to establish themselves in the pine trees. Mistletoe, which burrows into the cambian layer of the pines and causes circulation problems,

is also growing. Both threaten the health of the SCOL tree canopy. If drought were not an issue, the trees would be better able to resist these infestations.



During the colder months of October through January, SCOL staff and volunteers have been cutting down trees that have been harmed by beetles and mistletoe. This decreases the chances of spreading them to other trees. If this work is done in warmer months, it actually attracts more beetles. In the summertime, they use hand tools to remove bitterbrush between the trees.

Jake explains that, each time he goes out on the landscape, he examines a stand of trees within the project. He identifies the strongest trees. If he sees, for example, a healthy oak tree right beside a troubled tree, he marks the troubled tree for removal. This provides the healthy trees with a greater share of available water and reduces fire hazards.

Many volunteers and staff members have helped with this project. Volunteers include Greg Kust, Harlan Barcus, Michael Hilsen, Robert Wiley and Peter Frothingham. Staff members Abby Cummings, Anthony Kimple and Peg Swift have also worked with Jake on the project.

SCOL has a wonderful partnership with its neighbors, Russel and Lane Schroeder. The Schroeders, father and son, help take down the dead pine trees on SCOL's land. With their on-site mill, they plan to mill the recovered timber and split it evenly with SCOL. At SCOL, close to six cords of firewood have been cut and organized. Staff aspire to sell this wood for the benefit of KCC.

If work on the 15-acre site already underway is successfully completed, KCC has the option to continue its partnership in two-year increments for a total of ten years. We will continue to keep you updated as work progresses.

Notes From the Dharma Store

By Diane Lucas

Sometime in the coming winter, date and time yet to be determined, KCC's dharma store will be hosting a used book sale. You can help by holding on to your used Dharma books, tapes, CDs, and DVDs. If you absolutely need to move them sooner, please let one of us know.

In anticipation of Ringu Tulku Rinpoche's visit in November, we are working to have many of Rinpoche's titles available for sale. With a mastery of the English language, borne of the fact that he fled Tibet and learned English in India at a young age, in addition to his grasp of the western mentality and his penchant for story telling, Ringu Tulku's books make some difficult subjects eminently readable. We have been happy to learn that a number of his books, which have been difficult to obtain, are being reprinted in anticipation of his North American tour and will be available to us before his visit. Several titles already await you in our store, where your purchase helps support KCC.

As always, please feel free to suggest ways we can better serve your needs.

Events in September and Early October

Upcoming events at KCC include some new and some continuing opportunities. Watch the website, www.kcc.org, for updates. For now, here is what is happening:

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Death and Dying Seminar

Eight classes to be held on consecutive Sundays at Heart of Wisdom Zen Temple, beginning in October. Participants are not required to attend every session.

Sundays, October through November 20 - 3:30pm to 5:30pm

~~October 2, 2016~~

October 9, 2016

October 16, 2016

October 23, 2016

October 30, 2016

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Led by Chozen Bays (co-abbot and co-founder of Great Vow Zen Monastery and Heart of Wisdom Zen Temple), and by Erik Fromme
Co-taught by Mary Woods and David McWherter

[Register through Heart of Wisdom](#)

Young Adult Group

This monthly meeting welcomes the under-40 set to gather and talk about the dharma as it relates to daily life.

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Mandala Practice: Holding the World in the Palm of Your Hand and Letting Go— Invigorating Your Practice In the Mahamudra Program - Class Four

The fourth and final class in this Mahamudra Program support series, this event will include a prepared teaching on the Mandala practice, Mandala group practice together (rice and mandala set-ups included), an opportunity to share experiences in community, and a ngondro and mahamudra question and answer session.

Saturday, October 8 - 9:00am to 12:00pm
Led by Erik Fromme and Bill Spangle

[REGISTER](#)

KCC Mind Training Group

The biweekly Thursday KCC Mind Training Group resumes this month, with Tim Campbell and Zopa Herron co-leading an exploration of the entire Lojong, or Mind Training tradition, including the Seven Points and beyond.

Thursdays, October 13, and 27, 2016 - 7:00pm to 9:00pm

SCOL Work Party

Help with a variety of indoor and outdoor activities. Please bring work clothes, gloves, a water bottle and your own lunch. "Restroom and good vibes provided."

Saturday, October 15, 2016 - 10:00am to afternoon

Board of Directors Meeting

Sunday, October 16, 2016 - 1:30pm to 4:30pm

Newcomers' Night

This is a great opportunity to stop by KCC, ask questions, and get acquainted with the community, as well as the ways of Tibetan Buddhism as practiced at KCC. If you are new or sort of new or just want the chance to be reintroduced to KCC, please stop by.

Thursday, October 20, 2016 - 7:30pm to 9:30pm

Children's Blessing

Lama Michael leads the teachers and community in welcoming children into the KCC sangha and celebrating our community's families. All are welcome.

Sunday, October 30, 2016 - 11:15pm to 12:00pm

For more events, **[view the KCC calendar.](#)**

Streaming

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73 NE Monroe Street
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Greetings, !

As the fullness of this issue indicates, this is a dynamic time for KCC. In addition to important updates on the New Urban Center, the Leadership Retreat, and the Dharma Store, we hope you enjoy our latest installment of the Thankga series curated by Sanje Elliott and our story about SCOL Manager, Peg Swift. We also have upcoming events for your review.

Please continue to send us your story ideas and suggestions. This newsletter is the product of our community's fertile minds!

With Gratitude

This month we wish to thank Phil Wallin for accepting the position of development director for KCC. Phil has embraced an assignment that is essential at this time when we are raising funds to purchase property for a larger urban center, and to meet the parallel increase in general expenses that growth entails. Phil is generously volunteering his expertise and experience. He has drafted a development plan that presents sangha members with plenty of opportunities to help, ranging from data entry to working on fun new fundraising ideas.

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John Jennings,
Linda Besant,
Diane Lucas,
Mary Woods,
Sanje Elliott,
Deborah Brink-Wohrmann,
Rosemarie Sweet, and
Ryan Fitz contributed to the
production of this newsletter.

Closer To the Goal: New Urban Center Update

By John Jennings

As I reported earlier, the New Urban Center Committee recently found a good candidate building and made an offer that was accepted. The next step was completing due diligence, which did not start immediately because seller and Committee members were out of town. However, once back in town, the committee dove headfirst into space planning, building inspections, zoning

and cost estimating. Three questions need to be answered:

- 1) Will the building accommodate our needs?
- 2) Can we accept the condition of the building?
- 3) Can we afford the repairs and renovation work it might need?

We are midway through the process of answering these questions. We have gone over the design of the spaces and tested different solutions to allow for offices, children's classroom, social area, and other needs. We have estimated the costs of upgrading the bathrooms and kitchen and some other alterations and finishes for the floors, walls and ceilings. We have had experts perform building and sewer inspections. A few tests and reviews are still needed before we have the complete picture of what is required to make this building work for us and be a safe and comfortable dharma center.



A subcommittee is working hard on the finance side of the equation. At this point, we plan to sell Monroe Street plus raise some additional funds to cover the costs of purchase, repair, and remodel. The sale does not need to happen until the spring or later thanks to bridge loans from sangha members to cover the immediate cash needed to purchase the building. Other articles and a letter to the sangha will explain this in more detail. All of this work is leading us to the goal of closing on or before December 7. Then the fun begins. Stay tuned.

KCC's Leadership Retreat—Moving To the Next Stage

By Linda Besant

Every year, KCC members invited by the Board of Directors gather for a leadership retreat. This year, thirty-five sangha members representing a spectrum of the community—the Program Council, the Board, SCOL and Urban staff, and heads or members of key committees and the Young Adult Group—met on October 21 and 22 at the Portland Insight Meditation Center. The setting was inspirational. A decade ago, PIMC purchased a church similar to the one KCC hopes to acquire for our New Urban Center, and they have turned it into a welcoming and comfortable home.

We began and ended each day practicing together. In between, our work



sessions were permeated by the approaching possibility that KCC will at last have a larger urban center, and the knowledge that the Three Year Retreatants are exactly halfway through their extraordinary commitment and SCOL will soon be available for other retreats.

“Unbridled Dreaming” served as Friday’s theme:

- Facilitator Sally Mead led the first session, where Lama Michael and six other members engaged in a dialogue of inquiry about our dreams for the future of the sangha.
- Tim Campbell and Linda Besant led session two, an update on where we stand in realizing the goals of KCC’s current strategic plan and the significant accomplishments of the past year.
- In session three, Phil Wallin, KCC’s new volunteer Director of Development, presented a development plan of resources and strategies to build a sustainable funding base for the sangha.
- Session four was a spirited discussion of our current efforts to organize and support volunteers; and of the potential mosaic of paid and volunteer human resources we might evolve to sustain and advance our programs and activities.

In a fascinating process, twelve of the vision inquiry questions generated on Friday served as the lens through which we aligned our efforts to “Evaluate and Define” on Saturday; Questions included: “How will we manage our evolution without turning it into a flurry of activity that undermines our practice;” “What would make it possible, in twenty-five years, to continue to have good access to teachers;” and “How does SCOL fit into our discussion of the new urban center.”

We worked in small groups for two sessions. In the first, we talked about immediate needs for the New Urban Center to guide decisions about initial renovations. And we opened initial discussion about the future use of SCOL starting in the fall of 2018, reaffirming that retreats of every length, from short to long, are vital to our practice.

Next, we generated a bounty of ideas about how to coordinate, communicate with, mentor and appreciate volunteers. (One example—make good use of the capabilities of Neon, our new data base system, to help organize and communicate with volunteers). We also birthed a flurry

of fun new ideas for fundraising events. (For example, a Dharma film series at the New Urban center, with popcorn).

The retreat closed with an outpouring of appreciation for KCC, thanking Lama Michael and our teachers for a center with such an authentic spiritual core and lineage connection; thanking past leadership that KCC is such a welcoming and open community with so many accomplishments; and calling out gratitude to those currently serving the sangha.

A full report of the leadership retreat will be available through KCC's Community Listserve and in hard copy within a month. We hope the tidbits given here will inspire everyone to eagerly await the full report and anticipate joining in to realize the dreams it contains.

Dharma Store News

By Diane Lucas

The Dharma store is happy to announce that a large selection of Ringu Tulku Rinpoche's books is now available at KCC in anticipation of his visit. This includes his Lazy Lama series of mini-books, priced at only \$6 each. If you have not already discovered it, you owe it to yourself to experience how clear and down-to-earth his writings are.

With the holidays just around the corner, please remember that a gift purchase at KCC benefits not only your friend or loved one, but KCC as well. Consider a gift of the just arrived Sacred Images of Tibet 2017 wall calendar, painted by Ben Barta, a student of KCC's own Thangka painter Sanje Elliott. We also offer a large selection of malas, candles, beaded charms, one-of-a-kind brocade items, and free trade chocolate. Please feel free to open the cabinet doors and explore for yourself.

We also have available several devotional items for your shrine, including brocade altar cloths, brass and copper offering bowls, pecha holders, and framed inspirational pictures. For Ngondro and Vajrayana practitioners, we offer mandala plates, mala counters, dorje and bell sets, and several practice texts. As always, please let us know what we can do to better meet your practice needs.

Marpa the Translator

By Sanje Elliott

Otherwise known as Marpa Choskyi Lodru, Marpa was the first Tibetan in the Kagyu lineage, and he is known for establishing that lineage in Tibet. He was born in 1012 and died in 1097 at the age of 84. Coming from a prosperous Tibetan family, he was not easily tamed as a child and eventually became a disciple of Buddhism. Not finding teachers to satisfy his needs in

Tibet, he travelled to India to study with great yogis and adepts, staying a few years in Nepal to acclimate to his descent into the hot plains of India.

In India, he found that Naropa, the most famous teacher of that time, had left his position as Abbot of Nalanda University and had become a wandering yogi. Marpa searched for months and finally found him and spent 12 years learning the teachings of the tantras, especially the Hevajra tantra. He also studied with great teachers such as Maitripa, Kukuripa and Atisha, learning the Six Doctrines of Naropa, Mahamudra, etc. In addition, he is said to have received teaching from the great female Yogini, Niguma. Altogether, he made three trips to Tibet, cashing all of his property into gold to pay honor to his teachers.

Back in Tibet, he attracted many students, among them the most famous, Milarepa. Without Marpa, the Kagyu Lineage would not have been introduced to Tibet.



Peg Swift's Story

By Deborah Brink Wohrmann

Peg Swift, SCOL Facilities Manager during the current Three Year Retreat, began sitting at KCC in 2005. She became involved with the committee that oversaw the design and build-out of the retreat center in Goldendale and spent seven weeks on the crew that framed the north wing cabins. Then, in 2013, she was one of the thirteen people to sit the initial One Year Retreat at SCOL.

After completing One Year Retreat in 2014, Peg returned to Portland. But she was no longer inspired to go back to any of her previous jobs. Besides the ten years she worked for the City of Portland as a combination inspector, certified to inspect structural, mechanical, electrical and plumbing installations in residential construction, she had worked as a union carpenter apprentice and then obtained a general contractors license.



About her current role at SCOL, she says, "I have two different jobs here—one is facilities management and the other is retreatant care. Being on a long retreat is quite challenging and having sat the One-Year, I know firsthand how helpful it is to have the genuine consideration of the staff. So when I think of my job here, retreatant care is really primary and my approach to that care is very much informed by my experience as a long retreatant. I am very committed to supporting those who are in retreat. They all have my utmost respect and I feel privileged to be in a position to support them in ways that allow them to fully focus on practice."

Peg says that not only did SCOL feel like a natural place to land but, in some ways, it felt like her career in construction, coupled with having sat the One Year Retreat, perfectly prepared her to support the Three Year Retreat. "While SCOL is very familiar to me, a large part of my motivation, then and now, is knowing the benefit to retreatants of having consistent and kind interactions with staff."

Although SCOL is isolated and "in the middle of nowhere," Peg assures us that there is a lot of coming and going. "We have Sangha members who come for work parties and special projects, to volunteer in the kitchen, to drop off items for retreatants, to attend Tsoks, and then of course the Lamas come regularly. I often think I am more social here than I was in Portland, and certainly the diversity of community is wider as the Sangha takes me beyond the circle I would normally orchestrate for myself."

On her days off she tries to be off, though this does not always happen. "I relax, read, clean the house, do laundry, hike, maybe go out to dinner somewhere, rent a movie. I think it's a pretty normal approach to time off, although, that said, our work time here is structured to encourage spiritual practice. So I try and do more sitting than I might were I back working a conventional job."

Since the staff works and lives so closely together, they try to support each other as they do the retreatants, "by being kind and patient with each other, and through clear and timely communication," says Peg.

On work days, the staff also sits together. "It is so very supportive to have the staff shrine room and to know that we sit together on the days we work together."

Save the Date! Bodhisattva Night — Saturday, December 17

Join us for an evening of stories and other offerings depicting and celebrating Bodhisattvas in all their incarnations. We would love to have your presence and participation. So start thinking of your own story to share as we gather community members, families and friends for this annual holiday get-together. Bring a holiday treat to share.

This photo, taken a couple of years ago, tells you all you need to know about how much fun we have on Bodhisattva Night. Please consider volunteering to help with planning and decorations. This may be our last chance to decorate our Monroe Street center in its holiday finery!



[Contact Mary Woods with questions or to volunteer.](#)

Preparing for your own Death

By Mary Woods

The Death And Dying Seminar is a series of classes offered by Chozen Bays, Roshi, MD, and Erik Fromme, M.D. Chozen is a teacher of Zen Buddhism and co-abbot at Great Vow Zen Monastery. She is also a pediatrician. Erik is a palliative care physician and an experienced Tibetan Buddhist practitioner.

David McWherter and I also participate. As a hospice nurse, my portion of these classes is focused on caring for people at end of life in the home or wherever else they may be. David, who is a marriage and family therapist, helps us explore the complicated issues that arise for loved ones when a person is dying and how to approach these difficult conversations.

This program provides a unique opportunity to learn about death and dying with topics that range from the practical to the sublime. Over the eight Sundays of the program, a wide variety of issues is addressed, from cremation and green burial to caregiving at end of life and writing your advanced directive. Opportunities to practice meditations on death will be offered along with suggestions for how to promote sacred space at home or anywhere one may be dying.

Often these subjects are not discussed until death is imminent. This series offers the chance to increase one's knowledge in a supportive environment where we can ask questions as we explore death and dying. I would encourage anyone to attend. Even if you can only attend one, I am sure it will be beneficial. There are three sessions remaining in November.

Events in November and Early December

Upcoming events at KCC include some new and some continuing opportunities. Watch the website, www.kcc.org, for updates. For now, here is what is happening:

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This monthly meeting welcomes the under-40 set to gather and talk about the dharma as it relates to daily life.

Friday, November 3, 2016 - 7:00pm to 9:00pm

All-Day Sit: Chenrezig

Resident Lama Michael Conklin provides detailed instruction on the practice of Chenrezig on alternating first Sundays from 9:00am to noon. Following a potluck lunch, there is a question-and-answer session from 1:30pm to 2:45pm, and then a last session of meditation ending at 4:00pm.

Sunday, November 6, 2016 - 9:00am to 4:00pm

Death and Dying Seminar

Eight classes to be held on consecutive Sundays at Heart of Wisdom Zen Temple, beginning in October. Participants are not required to attend every session.

Sundays through November 20 - 3:30pm to 5:30pm



November 6, 2016
November 13, 2016
November 20, 2016

Heart of Wisdom Zen Temple

Led by Chozen Bays (co-abbot and co-founder of Great Vow Zen Monastery and Heart of Wisdom Zen Temple), and by Erik Fromme
Co-taught by Mary Woods and David McWherter

[Register through Heart of Wisdom](#)

KCC Mind Training Group

The biweekly Thursday KCC Mind Training Group resumes this month, with Tim Campbell and Zopa Herron co-leading an exploration of the entire Lojong, or Mind Training tradition, including the Seven Points and beyond.



Thursday, November 10 2016 - 7:00pm to 9:00pm

SCOL Work Party

Help with a variety of indoor and outdoor activities. Please bring work clothes, gloves, a water bottle and your own lunch. "Restroom and good vibes provided."

Saturday, November 12, 2016 - 10:00am to afternoon

Newcomers' Night

This is a great opportunity to stop by KCC, ask questions, and get acquainted with the community, as well as the ways of Tibetan Buddhism as practiced at KCC. If you are new or sort of new or just want the chance to be reintroduced to KCC, please stop by.

Thursday, November 17, 2016 - 7:30pm to 9:30pm

Board of Directors Meeting

Sunday, November 20, 2016 - 1:30pm to 4:30pm

Ringu Tulku Rinpoche Teachings:

Scattering the Clouds—Working With Emotions

Saturday, November 26 - 7:00pm to 9:00pm

Rinpoche will discuss Buddhist approaches to working with emotions, including ways to release and transform emotions to reveal our innate wisdom.

Wisdom Mind, Compassionate Heart—The Union of Relative and Ultimate Bodhicitta

Sunday, November 27 - 9:00am to 5:00pm

This all-day program will cover the union of relative and ultimate bodhicitta, or, in other words, the union of profound compassion and deep insight.

Location: First Unitarian Church of Portland,
Buchan Building, 1226 SW Salmon St.

Monday and Tuesday, November 28—29:
Additional Events To Be Announced

[Read more at the KCC website.](#)



REGISTER

Young Adult Group

This monthly meeting welcomes the under-40 set to gather and talk about the dharma as it relates to daily life.

Friday, December 2, 2016 - 7:00pm to 9:00pm

All-Day Sit: Zhinay

Resident Lama Michael Conklin provides detailed instruction on the practice of Zhinay on alternating first Sundays from 9:00am to noon. Following a potluck lunch, there is a question-and-answer session from 1:30pm to 2:45pm, and then a last session of meditation ending at 4:00pm.

Sunday, December 4, 2016 - 9:00am to 4:00pm

Streaming

KCC now streams most events on YouTube at this URL:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/kccmedia>

Remember: If shopping on Amazon, please shop Smile.Amazon.com with KCC as your charity of choice. It's an easy way to support KCC!

[View this message in your web browser.](#)

[Click here](#) to unsubscribe from KCC's e-newsletter.

Our mailing address is:

73 NE Monroe Street
Portland, OR 97212

Greetings, !

In this festive month, we have so much to celebrate - a just-completed successful and rewarding visit by Ringu Tulku, a new urban center, the plan to hire our first full-time employee, and our upcoming gatherings. We report on this and more in our December newsletter.

Enjoy this issue and let us know how we can improve this offering and allow it to better serve our community.

With Gratitude

This month we offer gratitude to Ringu Tulku for his generous and enlightening presence with our sangha in November. The benefits of his teachings and blessings will ripple through KCC for years to come.

We offer special gratitude also to the 29 volunteers who worked so joyfully on the many events that filled Rinpoche's schedule; especially Rosemarie Sweet, who graciously led the organizing committee; Bill Spangle and Dora DeCoursey, who made the connections and preparations that facilitated Rinpoche's visit; Charlotte Kangas, who cooked for Rinpoche; Lynn McClenahan, who made all the arrangements with the Unitarian Church; Ryan Fitz and Linda Besant, who handled publicity and managed so many details expertly. All of us who will make use of audio recordings of Rinpoche's teachings also express our gratitude to Ryan Parsons, who so skillfully recorded each session.

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DONATE

SUSTAIN

VOLUNTEER

John Jennings,
Linda Besant,
Linda Logan,
Mary Woods,
Sanje Elliott,
Deborah Brink-
Wohrmann,
Tim Campbell,
Rosemarie Sweet, and
Ryan Fitz contributed to
the production of this
newsletter.

Crossing the Goal Line: New Urban Center Update

By John Jennings

A new era begins. The New Urban Center Committee has satisfactorily answered the three key questions –

- 1) Will the building accommodate our needs?
- 2) Can we accept the condition of the building?
- 3) Can we afford the repairs and renovation work it might need?

With these answered, the Board approved proceeding with the purchase! And on December 2 we closed on the deal. The two final details, the decommissioning of the oil tank by the seller and transfer of funds by KCC into the escrow account, were resolved just days before closing.

The answers to the questions, as expected, are conditional – things are rarely perfect. We have found that the building, with minor alterations, will meet our space needs well enough. We have determined that the general condition of the building is such that, with some efficient skilled work and some new equipment, like a modern heating and cooling system, it can indeed be safe and comfortable.

As to whether we can afford the repairs and renovation--there are two parts to that question. First of all, what will it cost? The New Urban Center technical subcommittee has been working hard to identify the most critical work and estimate the costs. Exact numbers will only become available as we gather bids for the work. Whether we can afford them or not will depend on how much we receive for the sale of 73 NE Monroe St. and what funds we can raise to add to the amount already in our capital account from previous donations. What is clear is that we have sufficient funding to carry out some of the most critical tasks, yet we still need more to achieve the minimum level of renovation the committee recommends at this time.

The Committee is now shifting its focus to the building work and the next task is to plan the construction activities so they can be done as the funds become available. Essential work prior to move in comes first, essential work after move in next, then desired work after that. The work could change as we succeed in raising additional funds. It would be ideal to complete as much of the essential work as possible prior to move-in.

The planning, design and construction phase ahead of us is expected to take four to six months, depending on availability of funds and volunteers. So we will not be moving out of Monroe Street for a while yet. Nonetheless, anticipate a lot of hustle and bustle as planning unfolds.

Linda Logan will guide the subcommittee working on selling Monroe Street and Adele Hilsen has stepped up to lead the move-out and move-in effort. Hats off to both of them! A number of volunteers have already offered to help with the physical labor and skilled carpentry needed for the construction work. An interior design work group is being formed to work with an architect.

If you are interested in helping in any of these areas, please [contact me](#).

Reflections on Dharma Talks by Ringu Tulku Rinpoche, Thanksgiving Week

By Deborah Brink Wohrmann

Ringu Tulku Rinpoche says most dharma happens in daily life. "The real practice is living in the world," he said. We need to realize how we impact another person all the time, he emphasized. "If I'm laughing, you laugh. If I'm crying, you cry."

Ringu Tulku Rinpoche has a way of telling stories and speaking that invited me to smile at my own awkwardness rather than squirm in embarrassment. I appreciated his kind presence, his clear sharing, and also appreciated those bold and generous members of the audience who asked questions. A highlight that evening was when a woman asked about her frequent feelings of anger.



"What makes you so angry?" he asked her.

The woman gave a similar response to what I might have said: she becomes angry when she feels she has been treated unfairly, insulted, or left out. She gets upset by what someone says or does, or when she feels slighted.

Here is when Rinpoche introduced the problem of expectations: "Our expectations cause us to want to be treated differently than how we are treated," he said. "But people have their way and we can be grateful for how they offer what they offer: It is their way."

"I love to eat," he said. "I'm one of those people who lives to eat, but when I'm in Germany the people are working so hard they forget to eat lunch or dinner. . . and they feed me thin slices of dark bread and some cheese. . . I could feel insulted, but this is also what they are eating. It is their way."

I was laughing so hard with a slice of my mother-in-law's pumpernickel bread in my mind's eye! My husband and friend were next to me and also laughing because they knew about my experience of going hungry in

Germany! On my first visit, I didn't much like this bread, but now we sometimes make it at home because we miss it between visits to my husband's family.



Another story told was about a young woman in Maine who was anxious and depressed. She was having a real hard time of it, and then one day she backed her pickup truck into a very expensive car while at the gas station.

"I'm so sorry!" she said to the older woman who emerged from the driver's seat of the expensive car. "I will call the police," said the young woman.

"No need for that," said the older woman. "Just give me your phone number. This is no big deal. I will call you in a few days."

The young woman was so surprised and grateful. "Thank you," she said.

In a few days the older woman called and told her she had not yet found anyone to fix her car for a reasonable price. "They want \$2000, and that's too much. I will call you when I find a better offer."

Another week passed, and the old woman called again. "I have found someone who will fix my car for only \$500. If you have money you can pay for this repair, but if you don't, don't worry about it. It's no big deal," said the old woman.

The young woman had no insurance. She had been out of work and she was struggling in every way.

"Soon her anxiety and depression lifted. She felt so much better," Rinpoche said. One person's kindness and generosity helped another person to overcome her dark feelings.

It is good to be reminded in such concrete terms of how I can impact another's life. The older woman driving her fancy car could have been furious. She could have called the police. She could have also done what she did but in a way that left the young woman feeling guilty and anxious. But this wise woman showed such love and understanding that it helped a stranger to heal.

I appreciated how Rinpoche, throughout the weekend, reminded me to develop my capacity to be patient and act wisely, with compassion.

Rinpoche's comments on anxiety and depression also stay with me. "In the West people have freedom, but this lead them to expect so much of themselves. They want to be the best at everything... So maybe the problem isn't that a person doesn't love herself enough but that she loves herself too much but expects to be different from how she is."



And when the topic of post-election fears came up, Rinpoche suggested that we act as we need to act. "If we can do something to improve a situation, do it," he said. We need to remember the part about doing something, 'Don't worry, do something.' I'll continue to ask myself, "What is it I can do?" And how will I contribute to growing peace, including all beings in my family?

KCC Seeks a Full-Time Project Management Coordinator

After decades of successful volunteer effort, KCC is ready to employ a full-time Project Management Coordinator (PMC) to assist the Board of Directors in managing an organization of our current complexity. This is a significant milestone for our community, concurrent with our move to a new Urban Center.

We seek a full-time management coordinator who will oversee the work of KCC's multiple volunteer administrative and Dharma-related committees; who is excited by the challenges facing this community and will play a major role in helping us meet them; who enjoys supporting others to organize their work; who loves to set up systems and build volunteer support structures; and who can call on the paramita of patience when working in an organization that is undergoing substantial change and will still be 90% volunteer-run.

We seek applicants with the following core competencies: Strong verbal and written communication skills; excellent interpersonal skills; volunteer management; planning and project management for an organization; leadership and independent judgment; computer skills in word processing and data management; knowledge of financial reports and budgets.

This is a 40 hrs/week position. Work hours will be flexible to accommodate evening and weekend meetings and events. The position is salaried, including support toward health care benefits.

To receive a full job description, please [email Linda Besant](#). We request a letter of intent, resume and three references by December 9th. We will schedule personal interviews and request a writing sample from selected applicants, with the hiring decision to occur in January.

Annual Sangha Meeting At Our New Home

By Tim Campbell, Board President

It is our great joy to inform you that we will be having our 2016 Annual Sangha Meeting at KCC's new home, on Friday, December 9th, starting at 7:00 pm! What could be a better cause for celebration?

Keeping what is most important at the fore, we will begin and end our meeting by practicing together. In between practicing together, we will be able to explore the new building and see and feel the possibilities for our new Dharma center. We will have estimates of costs for repairs and upgrades, and hope that the spirit will move all of



us to pitch in with funds and volunteer efforts to help get everything ready so we can move in quickly. While we bask in the glow of our new home, we will be re-capping a momentous year, re-visiting our strategic goals, looking toward the future, and spending time together appreciating one another.

In honor of achieving this milestone in Lama Michael's life as our Resident Lama, bring sweet or savory pie to share. And remember, we will have owned the building for only two days—there will not be anything there except a couple of tables and lots of church pews. The heat will not even be working, so dress in layers and plan to keep them on, and bring your own plates, cups and utensils.

See you at 4936 NE Skidmore on December 9th, 7:00 pm!

Milarepa

By Sanje Elliott

Milarepa was the fourth person to hold the Kagyu lineage. His teacher was Marpa Lotsawa, the translator. He is perhaps one of the most famous of

Tibetan Yogis for his realization and his ability to transmit the Dharma in melodious and poetic phrases.

When Milarepa was quite young his father died, leaving Mila, his sister and mother at the hands of his father's brother. This brother, instead of caring for his family, took all their money and possessions and they were forced to become servants. Milarepa's mother convinced the young boy that he should learn sorcery when he was old enough in order to get revenge on his evil uncle.

Mila's black magic was strong enough to bring storms upon his uncle's house, causing 35 people to die. Word spread of this power and Milarepa suffered, knowing he had caused so much destruction. He vowed to find a great teacher who could purify his negative karma. He finally found Marpa, who kept Milarepa busy for years building towers and tearing them down, until finally Mila was redeemed of his evil deeds, and was able to take empowerments and teachings and eventually to live the life of a wandering yogi in the mountain forests. The book that tells of his life as a cotton-clad hermit is called "The One Hundred Thousand Songs of Milarepa."



(Thangka by Ben Barta, [click to enlarge](#))

Bodhisattva Night — Saturday, December 17

Join us for an evening of stories and other offerings depicting and celebrating Bodhisattvas in all their incarnations. We would love to have your presence and participation. So start thinking of your own story to share as we gather community members, families and friends for this annual holiday get-together.

This will be our last chance to decorate our Monroe Street center in its holiday finery! Bring a holiday treat to share. [Contact Mary Woods](#) with questions or to volunteer.



Dharma Store Treats For the Holidays

By Linda Logan

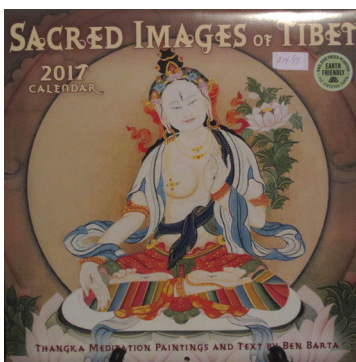
The Dharma store may surprise you this holiday season. There will be baked goods for sale from master cooks in the sangha and small, squishy pillows for a knee or neck or even to sit on in a pinch.



We will still have all the great books from our lineage, malas, and White Tara journals, plus an array of other wonders. Perhaps this is the year to have bowls on your shrine, or a buddha you have been thinking about.

Consider a gift of the just arrived *Sacred Images of Tibet 2017* wall calendar, painted by Ben Barta, a student of KCC's own thangka painter Sanje Elliott.

Remember - each time you purchase from KCC, you bring benefit twice, once to you and once to KCC.



Events in December

Upcoming events at KCC include some new and some continuing opportunities. Watch the website, www.kcc.org, for updates. For now, here is what is happening:

All events are at KCC Urban Center unless otherwise noted.

Young Adult Group

This monthly meeting welcomes the under-40 set to gather and talk about the dharma as it relates to daily life.

Friday, December 2, 2016 - 7:00pm to 9:00pm

All-Day Sit: Chenrezig

Resident Lama Michael Conklin provides detailed instruction on the practice of Chenrezig on alternating first Sundays from 9:00am to noon. Following a potluck lunch, there is a question-and-answer session from 1:30pm to 2:45pm, and then a last session of meditation ending at 4:00pm.

Sunday, December 4, 2016 - 9:00am to 4:00pm

KCC Mind Training Group

Tim Campbell and Zopa Herron co-lead an exploration of the entire Lojong, or Mind Training tradition, including the Seven Points and beyond.

Thursday, December 8, 2016 - 7:00pm to 8:30pm
Thursday, December 22, 2016 - 7:00pm to 8:30pm



Tonglen Practice Day

Using the three wisdoms of study, contemplation and meditation, Zopa Herron will lead an exploration of tonglen (giving and taking), a powerful practice of wisdom and compassion. Open discussion included.

Saturday, December 10, 2016 - 9:00am to 3:00pm



REGISTER

Bodhisattva Night

Join us for an evening of stories and other offerings depicting and celebrating Bodhisattvas in all their incarnations. An opportunity to share stories and gather with community members, families and friends in an annual holiday get-together.



Saturday, December 17, 2016 - 6:00pm to 8:00pm

Board of Directors Meeting

Sunday, December 18, 2016 - 1:30pm to 4:30pm

New Year's Retreat 2016-2017 With Refuge Ceremony

A short, two-day retreat providing participants with an opportunity to learn how to meditate using a few of the many Calm Abiding (Zhinay) methods available, to explore in open discussion how we can carry this meditation into our daily affairs and, vice versa, our daily affairs into our meditation.



Saturday, December 31, 2016 - 9:00am to 4:00pm

Sunday, January 1, 2017 - 9:00am to 3:30pm

Refuge Ceremony: Sunday, January 1 - 4:00pm - 6:00pm

REGISTER

Read more about the refuge ceremony on the [New Year's Retreat webpage](#).

Streaming

KCC now streams most events on YouTube at this URL:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/kccmedia>

Remember: If shopping on Amazon, please shop Smile.Amazon.com with KCC as your charity of choice. It's an easy way to support KCC!

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