



# The Shambhala Meditation Center of St. Johnsbury

February Newsletter 2004

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## Views at the Center:

### *The Community Meeting*

Considering Our Seat - Through the continuing dedicated energies of our community, our center has come a long way from being a bowling alley to its current delightful expression of Shambhalian Buddhist culture and teachings. Our downtown, centrally available situation is also considered very advantageous. Nonetheless, we need to give careful and thorough consideration to possibilities for eventual improvements and expansion that might best be served by moving to a new location. Such a move would likely entail considerable expense in renovations as it did with the thousands of dollars and many hours of personal time we have spent on our current place. So it seemed appropriate to go slowly and deliberately on this, perhaps setting up a moving fund and a committee to look into available real estate.

Of possible improvements, providing handicap accessibility is felt to be a strong priority. But such an existing space in the downtown area, if one could be located, would likely be prohibitively expensive for our current budget. Installation of a chair lift seems a more doable option and further detailed research will be done by Michael Leszczynski.

With this in mind, current thinking is to avoid further large and expensive renovations that are not portable and instead to focus on refining what we already have done.

The outer entryway could be made more appealing and noticeable.

The shrine could be finished off with a unifying low platform that extends under the whole area. It was felt that adding a guru's chair and side table to the shrine would affirm our devotion to this lineage and its teachings and especially represent our commitment to the Sakyong as the living embodiment of them and currently the root factor in how our center manifests. This then might help to strengthen and clarify the environment in which teachings and teachers from other lineages that are in accord with our view can be presented here.

It may also serve to alleviate, in a natural way, the concerns of some of our members who are now practicing under the guidance of teachers other than the Sakyong, as to where and how their loyalty lies without need for further definition.

Extending Further - The mysterious Delek System which has been lurking in the wings without taking the stage for many years now, was brought out for inspection once again. It was variously described as a safety net to monitor the well-being of our citizens, a means for communications between center and fringe of our larger mandala, and as a way of breaking down large population centers into more convenient groupings. Further examination of how this might fit into the situation at the St. Johnsbury center will be undertaken by Joan Kydd and Susan Shaw.

Our relationship with neighboring centers was discussed. Although we do have people from surrounding centers coming here to practice with us, it was hoped that we might reciprocate more by attending other center's events and perhaps go so far as to occasionally have our executive committee meet with theirs. Certainly we need to iron out our scheduling conflicts with Karme Choling.

A local's regional conference of the Northeast Kingdom practitioners, as originally conceived by Sarah Littlefeather, has morphed into a convention of centers within a day's drive and the focus has shifted to relating to Karme Choling.

Attending to Basics - Sarah Littlefeather, as our intrepid rota scheduler, has been having a tough time finding anyone willing to get down to the nitty gritty and take care of the cleaning tasks at our center. It seems we can talk the talk of uplifted vision, nurturing environment and generosity of extending our energies but find it difficult to actually get down to the kitchen sink and toilet where the physical world reflects how much we do of what we say. Perhaps it would help to emulate the Montpelier center in referring to this as Cleaning Practice. Bottom line is that coming in the entrance in winter with a trail of mud and salt leading up the stairs and puddled by the coat rack needs our attention doubly so there is thought to buddy up on this. Please volunteer before she even has to ask.

study programs:

Continuing to February 11 - Taming the Mind (Gaylon Ferguson and Susan Duquette)

March 5-7 The 9 Stages of Shamatha (Michael Greenleaf)

March 17 - April 14 Walking the Bodhisattva Path (teacher tba)

Course books: Taming the Mind and Walking the Bodhisattva Path. We will have them for sale at class and available in the library.

Taming the Mind, together with its companion course, Walking the Bodhisattva Path, introduces a student to the view and practice of hinayana and mahayana. These courses are based on a three-week seminar taught by Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche at Karne Choling in November 1999. In Taming the Mind, Rinpoche presents the hinayana path of renouncing samsara and the joy of developing discipline on the path that leads to liberation. He emphasizes the importance of having the confidence that comes from understanding what we are doing and presents the path in a vast perspective.

FROM THE LIBRARY:

The Shambhala Center's library has some wonderful new acquisitions. The center piece is the first four volumes of The Collected Works of Chogyam Trungpa. A second set of four volumes will complete the collection, which includes twenty-five full-length books plus selections from other major publications, as well as articles, seminar transcripts, poems, plays, and interviews, many of which have never before been available in book form.

Our collection of Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche's transcripts is growing. Taming the Mind and Walking the Bodhisattva Path (3 copies), Being Human, and Rousing Bodhicitta are excellent teachings for both beginning and older meditators.

In addition to the "Shambhala Sun" and "Buddhadharma: The Practitioner's Quarterly," the Library is now receiving a subscription to "Bodhi" magazine, a journal of vajrayana teachings by living Kagyu and Nyingma masters. Please look it over (on the round table) and let me know what you think of it. Any periodical, except for its most recent issue, may be taken out for two weeks. To check out a magazine, please write out on a blank piece of paper the magazine name and issue, your name and phone number, and check out date.

Place that paper in the back of the black box and, when you return the magazine, take it out and tear it up. Good at the beginning, good at the middle, good at the end.

Many thanks to Emily McAdoo for donating This Precious Life by Khandro Rinpoche and Wake Up to Your Life by Ken McLeod—teachers and teachings important to our sangha.

Michael Beauregard and I have started to organize the video and audio tapes. We need stacking holders for the audio tapes. If you have anything like that gathering dust in your house, please bring it in and we'll see if it works. Donations of audio and video tapes are very welcome. If you have questions about how to use the library or have any suggestions, please let me know.

Susan Shaw, Librarian

Practice department:

About those Mamo Chants that you see listed on our calendar here. This practice is done at the end of the year to pacify disgruntled and mischievous spirits that are especially energetic during this time, called dön season (kind of like a dharmic version of mud season). This clears the way for the new year to start fresh and clean with celebration. So please come to any or all of those evenings that the chants are scheduled. The more the better! Then follow with the Shambhala Day Ball!

Milarepa Day will be celebrated at Karne Choling on Saturday, March 6. Come for the day; bring The Rain of Wisdom (guides-in-training please come).

Marybeth Furr, Practice Coordinator

Facility update:

From Michael Leszczynski, Facility Coordinator.

The center has just installed new electric base heaters in the shrineroom on the north and south walls. Each unit has its own thermostat mounted on the inside entry wall of the shrineroom. Our landlord has payed for these units and their installation—we pay for electrical usage. There are six units and each uses up to 1500 watts, 9000 watts in total (full usage) or 9 kilowats of power. That's a lot of electricity we have to pay for. So the executive committee is requesting that we be very mindful of how we use them--obviously use them when needed but also remember to turn down or off when not needed.

### Facility Update:

You may notice mounted on the wall next to the freshly painted entry door (thanks to Alan Boye) is a reminder check list for the last person when leaving the center before locking up. It includes the following "Winter" tasks:

- \*Close all windows
- \*Leave open the following doors (this helps circulate heat): Kitchen, Shrineroom hall (next to kitchen), Restrooms, Director's Room, MI and Tantra Room.
- \*Turn off hot water heater
- \*Turn off shrineroom thermostats to "0" setting.
- \*Turn up all radiator valves to full "5" setting.
- \*Turn off all lights \*Lock upper and lower entry doors

Also, on February 13 (that's the Friday one) at 11am we will clean and paint the wooden entry floor the color of "Summer Skies." Please come and lend a hand if you can.

### The Executive Committee

Coordinators: Tune Faulkner & Newcomb Greenleaf

Practice: Mary Beth Furr

Finance: Vicky Schafer & Emily McAdoo

Facilities: Michael Leszczynski

Publicity: Sal DeMaio

Study: Anne Stevens

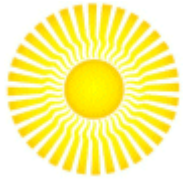
Secretary Karen Bufka

Rusung: Michael Taney

Membership: Barry Rossinoff

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# Shambhala Meditation Center

## of St. Johnsbury

### February 2004

| Monday   | Tuesday  | Wednesday   | Thursday   | Friday   | Saturday   | Sunday  |
|--|--|---|--|--|--|---|
|  |  |   |  |  |  | <b>1</b><br>9:00am-4:00pm<br>Heart Sutra<br>Program<br>11:00-12:00am<br>sitting   |
| <b>2</b><br>6:00pm yoga                                | <b>3</b><br>7:10-7:50am<br>silent sitting<br>5:00-6:30pm<br>Tai Chi<br>6:30pm<br>Executive<br>Committee<br>Meeting | <b>4</b><br>6:00-7:00pm<br>silent sitting<br>7:00-8:30pm<br>"Taming The<br>Mind" class                                | <b>5</b><br>9:00am<br>yoga<br>6:00-7:00pm<br>sitting and<br>chants<br>7:10pm talk                                | <b>6</b><br>9:00am yoga<br>6:00-7:00pm<br>Sadhana of<br>Mahamudra  | <b>7</b>   | <b>8</b><br>9:00am-noon,<br>1:00-3:30pm<br>nyinthon with<br>Sukhavati<br>10:00-11:00am<br>Learn To<br>Meditate          |
| <b>9</b><br>6:00pm yoga                                | <b>10</b><br>7:10-7:50am<br>silent sitting<br>5:00-6:30pm<br>Tai Chi<br>5:30-7:00pm<br>mamo chants                 | <b>11</b><br>6:00-7:00pm<br>silent sitting<br>5:30-7:00pm<br>mamo chants<br>7:00-8:30pm<br>"Taming The<br>Mind" class | <b>12</b><br>9:00am<br>yoga<br>5:30-7:00pm<br>mamo chants<br>6:00-7:00pm<br>sitting and<br>chants<br>7:10pm talk | <b>13</b><br>9:00am yoga<br>5:30-7:00pm<br>mamo chants             | <b>14</b><br>5:30-7:00pm<br>mamo chants  | <b>15</b><br>11:00-12:00am<br>sitting<br>1:30pm<br>"Wake Up To<br>Your Life" class<br>4:00pm-on<br>Vajrayogini<br>Feast |
| <b>16</b><br>6:00pm yoga<br>5:30-7:00pm<br>mamo chants | <b>17</b><br>7:10-7:50am<br>silent sitting<br>5:00-6:30pm<br>Tai Chi<br>5:30-7:00pm<br>mamo chants                 | <b>18</b><br>6:00-7:00pm<br>silent sitting<br>5:30-7:00pm<br>mamo chants  | <b>19</b><br>9:00am<br>yoga<br>5:30-7:00pm<br>mamo chants<br>6:00-7:00pm<br>sitting and<br>chants<br>7:10pm talk | <b>20</b><br>9:00am yoga<br>6:00-7:00pm<br>Sadhana of<br>Mahamudra | <b>21</b><br>Shambhala Day at<br>Karne Choling<br><br>8:00 pm<br>Shambhala Ball<br>at the<br>Masonic Lodge | <b>22</b><br>11:00-12:00am<br>sitting   |
| <b>23</b><br>6:00pm yoga                               | <b>24</b><br>7:10-7:50am<br>silent sitting<br>5:00-6:30pm<br>Tai Chi   | <b>25</b><br>6:00-7:00pm<br>silent sitting  | <b>26</b><br>9:00am<br>yoga<br>6:00-7:00pm<br>sitting and<br>chants<br>7:10pm talk                               | <b>27</b><br>9:00am yoga   | <b>28</b>  | <b>29</b><br>11:00-12:00am<br>sitting   |