

# Springs Mountain Sangha

A Zen Buddhist Community

Springs Mountain Sangha

Colorado Springs

voice mail: (719) 684-0210

www.smszen.org

## The Dharma Rag

Wpvmnf!2-!Jttvf!2!

•!Efdncfs!3119!•!

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### Coming Up for Springs Mountain Sangha

#### —In December

**The Buddha You Retreat**—December 3 through 7, Green Mountain Falls. Page 8.

**Dharma Talk by David Weinstein, Roshi**—Monday, December 8. Page 8.

**Buddhist Movie Night**—Thursday, December 11. Page 4.

**Solstice, Soup, and Sutra Sing**—Sunday, December 21. Page 3.

**New Year's Eve Party**—Wednesday, December 31. Page 3.

#### —In January

**A New Year's Day Sit**—Thursday, January 1. Page 4.

**Buddhist Movie Night**—Thursday, January 15. Page 4.

**Precepts Class**—Sundays, starting January 18. Page 8.

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Springs Mountain Sangha's Monthly Newsletter: *The Dharma Rag*

Editor: Lee Overmann. Published every month, mostly.

We encourage submissions of articles related to Buddhism and the Way, event announcements, letters to the editor, reviews, poems, recipes, and other sharings from all readers! Send them by e-mail to [SMSDharmaRag@hotmail.com](mailto:SMSDharmaRag@hotmail.com), or, submit them by snail-mail to P.O. Box 25277, Colorado Springs, CO 80936-5277. The deadline for the next month's publication is the third Friday of each month; submissions may be lightly edited by a loving hand. Please visit our Web site at [www.smszen.org](http://www.smszen.org)!

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## Eibsnb!Ubml!

Friends,

What about a way that stalwartly, over the long haul, refuses to offer certainty in an oh-so-uncertain world? What good is this, when you are scared or angry—or, for that matter, when you are on top of the world and wish to stay there? Why, riding blue sky over a basin of pink to travel to family, am I so grateful for this odd thing we do?

It's an awareness of our sacred common endeavor that moves me lately. As author Louise Erdrich pointed out in a recent interview, in learning the words of a new language, you are learning to pray. And this is true, I think, of our learning the language of Zen together. As we witness with each other, in this language, the momentary lives of our hearts, we create a mutual space that is sacred. You can feel it. This is what I see lately, over and over, gathering with different ones of you at different times.

The room was golden and thick with it last Sunday afternoon during our koan gathering, when members noticed that there was a large Mind of us awakening that was not the same as our individual minds, that the train-sound, the afternoon light, the taste of cranberry bread ran through the open awareness in the room, as well as running through each of us alone.

The Dharma Hall at the Air Force Academy was also thick with this presence on Wednesday evening, when someone spoke about coming to check out the group because of an ongoing struggle with anger, and then discovering that we, that very evening, were taking up the precept on not indulging in anger. That person sat with amazement while another member described coming into the room with an anger that had sat on him for days. He didn't even want to be there, but had found himself coming anyway. He had sat down, angry, and found himself taking a very long, deep breath and then holding it until he felt the holding in his whole body; then breathing out, and holding the empty bottom of the breath a long time, and then repeating, for quite a while, and finding a spaciousness emerging. Another cadet described watching how two large polo players fighting commanded a certain kind of respectful attention, while one angry player just looked silly—and his observation that the same dynamic worked internally, where he could fail to engage the internal voice angrily but instead be curious. He found that the mind of curiosity seemed to replace the angry person and created a release from the all-consuming nature of the anger.

Three of us sat in the labyrinth outside of Shove Chapel on Tuesday, and there one described his discovery of two distinct experiences of attention: looking right at an emotion that arises and holding his attention there, letting it present itself, on the one hand, and looking right through it, letting it be diaphanous, on the other. We noticed how, sitting on the ground under the darkening sky, we included bicycles and the arcs of footsteps.

It's not that we arrive at any destination at moments like this. It's that we find ourselves so fully where we are, together and individual, "woven and not interwoven."

Thank you. Sarah

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Tqfdjbm!Ofxt!boe!Vqebuft!

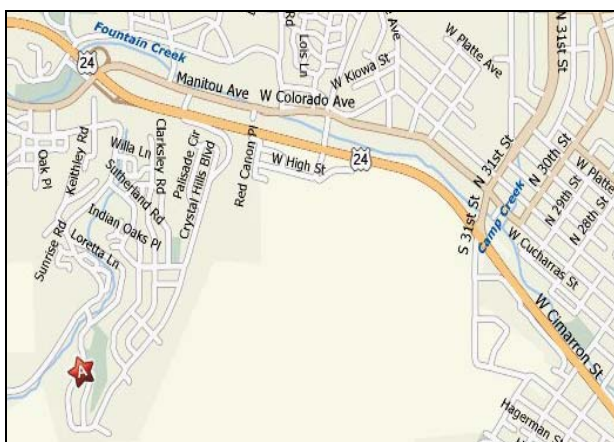
# Solstice, Soup, and Sutra Sing at Sarah's

~ Sunday, the 21<sup>st</sup> of December ~

Starts at 3:00 PM

Please reserving the afternoon of the 21st of December to gather at Sarah's to sing sutras and share soup. I'm thinking perhaps gathering at 3:00 PM for an open time of Singing and some exploration/discussion of our Sutra Service, and Soup and fresh bread, maybe a nice fire...

Looking forward to this, myself, always a joy to sing the sutras; I hope a number of you will join me, and it would be helpful to have some idea of how many, so please RSVP (and if you are just moved to come last minute, that's great too). William



**At Liz's house**  
**533 Crystal Hills Blvd.**  
**Manitou Springs**

# New Year's Eve Party

**December 31**

**8 PM to midnight**



Bring *hors d'œuvres* or wine; bring a guest or three!

For information or to RSVP, contact Donella at [donella.berry@worldnet.att.net](mailto:donella.berry@worldnet.att.net).

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*The Springs Mountain Sangha presents*



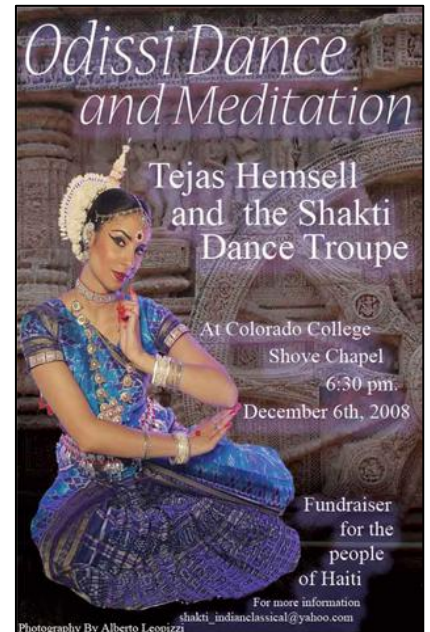
# New Year's Day Sit

## January 1st

### At the Woman's Club

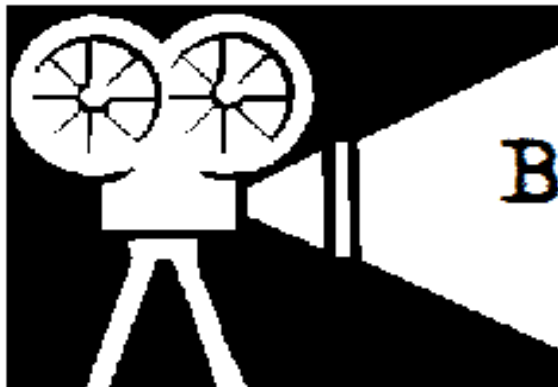
### 9 AM to 4 PM

Details TBD



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Thursdays at 7:30 p.m.



# Buddhist Movie Night

Colorado College, Worner Center, W.E.S.  
Room

These movies are free and guaranteed to excite your brain!

Upcoming movies--

- December 11
- January 15
- February 5

*SMS ZEN*  
Sponsored by  
Springs Mountain Sangha

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Wpjdft**Sangha Service Project**

Dear Sangha,

Springs Mountain Sangha is supporting Heifer International this year by raising money for a water buffalo—or two, or more! Briefly, Heifer International is a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to moving families towards self-reliance. It uses a community development model that assisted more than 150,000 families last year with gifts of animals and trainings. In addition, members of more than 250,000 additional families received special training in sustainable farming techniques. Heifer International has won the *Conrad N. Hilton Humanitarian Prize*. If you'd like additional information their website is [www.heifer.org](http://www.heifer.org).

Springs Mountain Sangha is donating \$100, and we'll be collecting checks at each function now through December. If you wish to participate, please make your check payable to Springs Mountain Sangha and designate it for Heifer International. Any amount is wonderful; \$25 is not the minimum. And if you're comfortable reaching out to family and friends who might support this project, do!

Metta! Liz

**Heifer International—Outreach Project**

Happy holidays from your whole family to a family in need with the gift that represents a water buffalo. A water buffalo can lead a hungry family out of poverty and give them a chance for a bright future filled with hope and free from hunger.

In poor Filipino villages, water buffalo from Heifer provide draft power for planting rice and potatoes, milk for protein and manure for fertilizer and fuel. A farmer can plant four times more rice with a buffalo than by hand.

Water buffalo haul heavy loads to the market, where the sale of extra produce brings in vital income for clothing, medicine and school. By renting their buffalo to neighbors, Heifer partner families can earn money for

home improvements.

Protein-rich milk, strength to till soil, manure to enrich the land ... so many benefits. And, in turn, water buffalo are happy just to graze on coarse grasses and other plants not suitable for harvesting.

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## What Is the Great Buddha Way?

Wendy Shinn

Chanting my vows this morning, I take time to sensitize myself to the meaning of this musical chant, recited so repetitiously that if I don't take time to honor the application, it becomes much like the Apostles Creed of my Christian days. And I begin to examine just what it means to me, again.

What is the Great Buddha Way? The last two lines of the Four Boundless Vows, taking a third and fourth position, seeming placed so in order of importance—to honor the work we do for ourselves. We study. We live the Great Buddha Way. But, the first two lines—*wake the beings of the world* and *set endless heartaches to rest*—are rarely addressed or discussed.

I witness book studies, koan gatherings, retreats—all self-serving. I witness scholarship discussions so far removed from the daily life experience that I feel I am part of a congregation of thought, a scholarship, a discourse of ideas. And I ask myself frequently, where is the practice of waking other beings?

I observe the polishing, gasho-ing, proper hand placement, and sitting posture.

I watch as the newish Buddhists, the young Buddhists, the mellowed-out Buddhists, the veteran Buddhists, the all-knowing Buddhists march forth in the catholic rituals of my childhood, perfecting the details as they avoid eye contact, hints of social interaction, and/or the cultural humanity of noticing each other. Solemnly, quietly like monks in evening vespers whispering prayers to Jesus, the discipline of inner-work or upper-work (given a deity) continues. And I stir with discomfort as these moments jolt reminders of my Sunday school mornings.



As I watch, this fledging teetering on a delicate branch, I see attention to the details of things, the cleanup, the organization, the planning. Where is the practice to setting heartaches?

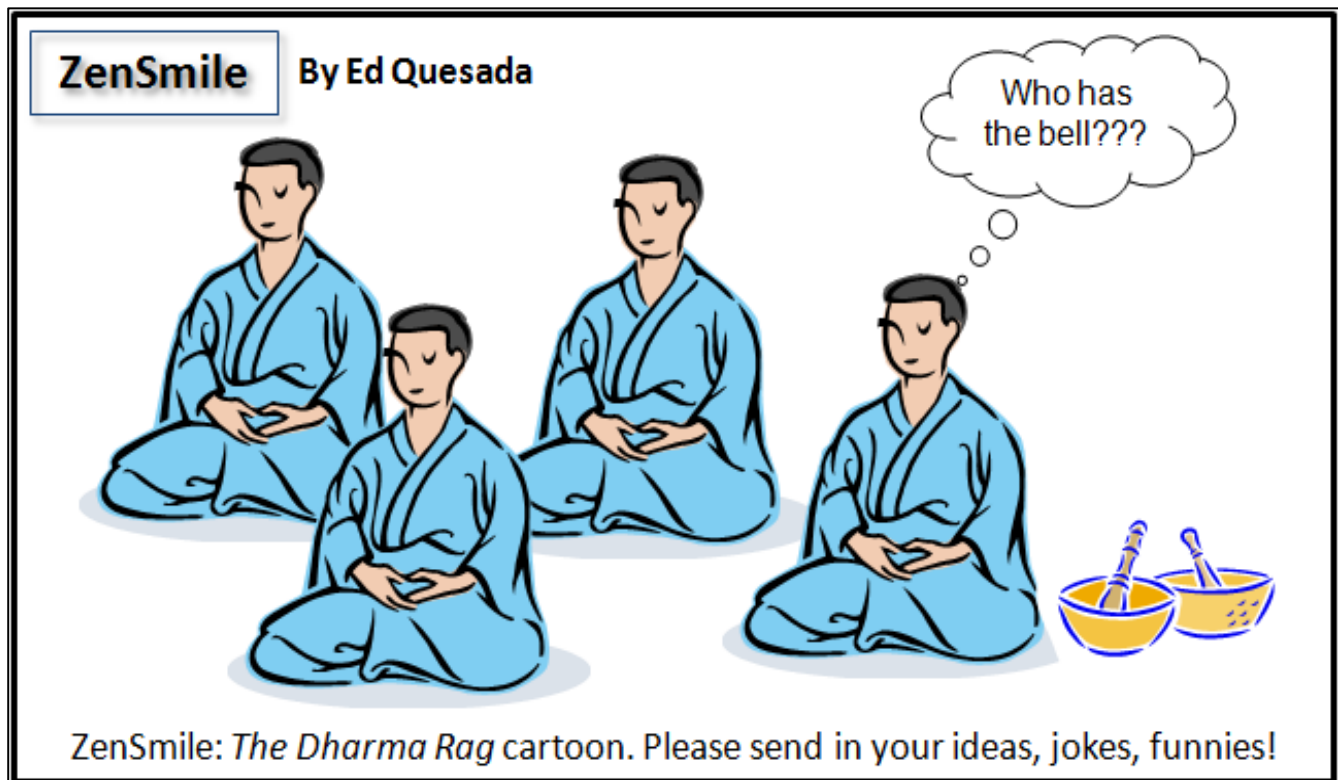
The questions I ask here are these:

- How is the actual ministry of Buddhist practice—the wakening of others, the ministry of love, attention, bearing witness—demonstrated?
- What do *you* do, as an individual who demonstrates the path you walk?

I long for role models. I search for those who demonstrate this active practice. As in my daily life, I look for heroes, heroines, leaders of wisdom, and samplings of following the Great Buddha Way. Then I turn to the books which once again describe it. But even the authors fall short by only defining it.

I'm looking forward to perhaps an essay or two which describes your personal journey as a Buddhist. We learn from modeling our behaviors or witnessing the behaviors of others. Would you be willing to share how you are doing this?

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## Tbohib!Cvtjoftt!

### Steering Committee Activity

The Steering Committee met on November 9 at Sarah's home. Present were Joan Sutherland (via telephone), Sarah, Clay, Victor, Lee, Andrew, Liz, and Frank.

Some of the key agenda items (such as the election of officers) were deferred to the next meeting due to the time involved in discussing other business. The outstanding items will be carried forward to the next meeting.

**Sangha direction.** This subject was the focus of the meeting. With Joan attending via telephone, we started a discussion of the Sangha direction; this topic will most likely engage the Steering Committee for some time. Key discussion points that may lead to future action by the Sangha included the following:

**What kind of Sangha are we?** A question that first came up this past summer is "What kind of Sangha are we? Are we a 'Zen Club' or a 'Zen Center?'" In the past, these expressions have created emotional responses, and it was good to deconstruct the terminology. Basically, a "Zen Club" is a group of people who decide to sit together. If there is a teacher involved, she or he is contracted to participate and offer her/his services on a limited basis. By comparison, a "Zen Center" actively takes the dharma into the larger community. Two characteristics of a Zen Center are (1) it has a resident teacher, and (2) it has a "place" (i.e., a dedicated location) so people always know where to find it. Joan offered that both paths are honorable and that we need to decide which one we want to be. Some of those present thought the Sangha is in

between the two alternatives, and some thought the Sangha might be in transition from one to the other. Some of the questions that surfaced around this issue included:

**What is the Sangha currently?** Are we a Zen Center now—perhaps just a young one? What areas need to be addressed—membership, finances, opportunities to serve? How do we get more people involved? How do we better organize events and improve Sangha communication?

**What is the role of our resident teacher?** And what kind of support does she need? We acknowledged that the Sangha has made a commitment towards her practice and her participation in the Sangha. However, as the Sangha moves forward, what changes are needed? For example, Sarah's day is often interrupted by people calling with questions on day-to-day Sangha business and scheduling. What needs to happen for the Sangha to take on these responsibilities?

**What support does our teacher need?** For example, no one has been acting as the teacher liaison for Saturday Work in the Room, so Sarah has had to prepare the area beforehand and tear it down afterward by herself.

**What other roles do we need?** We thought about organizing dedicated teams with specific responsibilities. These teams might include:

- We have an existing *finance team* and an ad hoc *place team* investigating a future home for the Sangha.
- We might organize a *practice team* to provide leadership for practice and events; this might consist of a pool for leadership in service, retreats, and special roles such as teacher liaison. Perhaps the core of this group could start with the meditation instructors.
- We might organize a *retreat planning team* to take a long term view of retreat planning; this might include short-term retreat planning, with *individual event teams* launched as needed for specific events.
- We might organize a *communications team* to oversee the newsletter, Web site, event publicity, and so on.

The Steering Committee will continue discussing these issues with the goal of presenting recommendations to the Sangha at the next All-Sangha Meeting in March 2009.

### Other Business

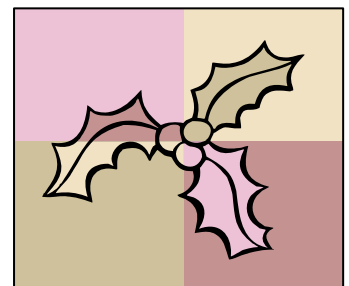
Wendy Palmer has resigned from the Webmaster role. A deep bow to Wendy for all her work to manage the Sangha's Web site! The Steering Committee agreed on a gift to thank her for her efforts.

Liz proposed the Sangha support Heifer International ([www.heifer.org](http://www.heifer.org)) as a service project. The Sangha will contribute \$100 and will solicit individual contributions from the Sangha membership.

### Future Business:

- Election of officers
- Pull together issues brought up in this meeting

The next Steering Committee meeting is scheduled for Sunday, December 14, from 3–5 PM at the Woman's Club.





## Puifs!Mpdbm!Hspvqt!

### **Wet Mountain Sangha—Pueblo** **Winter Schedule**

- **Wednesdays:** Meditation 6:00 PM to 7:15 PM. Please join us as you wish for the traditional 25/10/25 minutes of sitting/walking/sitting meditation. As usual, there will be sharing and announcements and tea afterwards!
- **Saturdays:** Morning meditation second and fourth Saturdays of each month, 8:00 – 10:00 AM, with four periods of alternating sitting and walking; no chants or announcements.

**We meet at the Center for Inner Peace,  
740 W. 15<sup>th</sup> Street, Pueblo, CO 81003**

**Check out our Web site for more info:  
<http://wetmountainsangha.org>**

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- **Thubten Shedrup Ling (TSL)**  
tslcolorado@yahoogroups.com
- **Rocky Mountain Insight**  
www.rockymountaininsight.org

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**Dances of Universal Peace** will be held the 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of each month through May from 7:00–9:00 PM at Unity Church of the Rockies, 1945 Mesa Road. Join our new leader, Bob Screws, for an evening of devotional or Sufi Dances drawn from many cultures and religions. He leads simple songs and circle dances for people of good heart and all ages. Please call Ann Grant Martin for more information at 719-575-0152.

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## *Qigong*

**With Ellie Coriell, LPC CACIII**  
Shove Chapel, Tuesday  
evenings, 5:30–6:30 PM.



For more information, please contact Ellie at 719-339-7415 or ecoriell@msn.com.

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## Uif!Pqfo!Tpvdsf (www.joansutherland.net)

- **Koan Salon.** Wednesdays, 3:00–5:00 PM, at the home of Ellie Sernet (directions provided upon registration). Sign up for the salon in eight-week sessions; the second session is Oct. 29 to Dec. 17. The cost is on a sliding scale of \$80 to \$160 per series. Register with Pasha Hogan at pashahogan@cybermesa.com.
- **Meditation, Dharma Talks, Conversation.** Thursdays, 7:00–8:30 PM. Introduction to meditation is offered the first Thursday of each month at 6:45 PM. By donation. Cerro Gordo Temple, 1404 Cerro Gordo Road, Santa Fe, NM.
- **Shelter in Each Other.** Those who took part in this summer's refuge ceremony will meet quarterly to continue the conversation and camaraderie. RSVP to Pasha Hogan at pashahogan@cybermesa.com.

### **Joan's 2009 Retreat Schedule**

- **December 11–14,** Morning Star Meditation Retreat in honor of the Buddha's enlightenment. Sangre de Cristo Retreat Center, Santa Fe, NM.
- **March 20–22,** Vernal Equinox Koan Retreat, Cerro Gordo Temple, Santa Fe, NM.
- **April 13–19,** Meditation Retreat, Springs Mountain Sangha, Colorado Springs, CO.
- **June 8–13,** Meditation Retreat, Ocamora Retreat Center, Ocate, NM.
- **September 13–19,** Meditation Retreat, Synergia Ranch, Santa Fe, NM.
- **October 23–25,** All Hallows Koan Retreat, Cerro Gordo Temple, Santa Fe, NM.

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**Register for Open Source events**  
by sending an e-mail to [retreats@joansutherland.net](mailto:retreats@joansutherland.net).  
**Join the Open Source e-mail list**  
by sending an e-mail to [list@joansutherland.net](mailto:list@joansutherland.net).

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## Qbdjgid! [ fo!Jotujuvuf (www.pacificzen.org)

- **Sesshin Retreats, St. Dorothy's Rest:**  
Jan. 18–25; Apr. 4–11; June 7–14; Oct. 11–18.

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# December!

2008

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	<p><b>1</b></p> <p>Meditation and Sutra Service Shove Chapel 6:15–7:30 PM</p>	<p><b>2</b></p>	<p><b>3</b></p>	<p><b>4</b></p>	<p><b>5</b></p>	<p><b>6</b></p> <p>Meditation, Four Periods Shove Chapel 6:30–8:30 AM Breakfast-Wooglin's</p>
<p><b>The Buddha You Retreat with David Weinstein, Roshi</b> Green Mountain Falls, CO</p>						
<p><b>7</b></p> <p style="background-color: #90EE90; text-align: center; padding: 2px;">Buddha You Retreat</p>	<p><b>8</b></p> <p>Meditation, with Dharma Talk by David Weinstein, Roshi Shove Chapel 6:15–7:30 PM</p>	<p><b>9</b></p>	<p><b>10</b></p> <p>Meditation Shove Chapel 6:00–7:00 AM</p>	<p><b>11</b></p> <p style="background-color: #90EE90; text-align: center; padding: 2px;">Buddhist Film</p> <p>Worner Center 7:30 PM</p>	<p><b>12</b></p>	<p><b>13</b></p> <p>Meditation, Four Periods Shove Chapel 6:30–8:30 AM Breakfast-Wooglin's</p>
<p><b>Morning Star Meditation Retreat with Joan Sutherland, Roshi, Santa Fe, MN</b></p>						
<p><b>14</b></p> <p style="background-color: #90EE90; text-align: center; padding: 2px;">Steering Meeting</p> <p>Woman's Club 3:00–5:00 PM</p> <p style="background-color: #ADD8E6; text-align: center; padding: 2px;">Morning Star Retreat</p>	<p><b>15</b></p> <p>Meditation &amp; Social Shove Chapel 6:15–7:30 PM</p>	<p><b>16</b></p>	<p><b>17</b></p> <p>Meditation Shove Chapel 6:00–7:00 AM</p>	<p><b>18</b></p>	<p><b>19</b></p>	<p><b>20</b></p> <p>Meditation, Four Periods Shove Chapel 6:30–8:30 AM Followed by breakfast @ Wooglin's</p>
<p><b>21</b></p> <p style="background-color: #90EE90; text-align: center; padding: 2px;">Solstice, Soup, and Sutra Sing</p> <p>Sarah's house</p>	<p><b>22</b></p> <p>Meditation, Two Periods Shove Chapel 6:15–7:30 PM</p>	<p><b>23</b></p>	<p><b>24</b></p> <p>Meditation Shove Chapel 6:00–7:00 AM</p>	<p><b>25</b></p>	<p><b>26</b></p>	<p><b>27</b></p> <p>Meditation, Four Periods Shove Chapel 6:30–8:30 AM Followed by breakfast @ Wooglin's</p>
<p><b>28</b></p>	<p><b>29</b></p> <p>Meditation, Talk, and Discussion Shove Chapel 6:15–7:30 PM</p>	<p><b>30</b></p>	<p><b>31</b></p> <p>Meditation Shove Chapel 6:00–7:00 AM</p>			

<p style="font-size: 4em; color: red; margin: 0;">January</p> <p style="font-size: 2em; color: red; margin-top: 20px;">2009</p>	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	
						<b>1</b> A New Year's Day Sit Women's Club 9:00 AM-4:00 PM	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> Meditation, Four Periods Shove Chapel 6:30-8:30 AM Followed by breakfast @ Wooglin's
	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> Meditation and Sutra Service Shove Chapel 6:15-7:30 PM	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> Meditation Shove Chapel 6:00-7:00 AM	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> Meditation, Four Periods Shove Chapel 6:30-8:30 AM Followed by breakfast @ Wooglin's	
	<b>11</b> Steering Meeting Woman's Club 3:00-5:00 PM	<b>12</b> Meditation & Social Shove Chapel 6:15-7:30 PM	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> Meditation Shove Chapel 6:00-7:00 AM	<b>15</b> Buddhist Film Worner Center 7:30 PM	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> Meditation, Four Periods Shove Chapel 6:30-8:30 AM Followed by breakfast @ Wooglin's	
	<b>18</b> Precepts Study Group Sarah's house 1:00-3:00 PM	<b>19</b> Meditation, Two Periods Shove Chapel 6:15-7:30 PM	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> Meditation Shove Chapel 6:00-7:00 AM	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> Meditation, Four Periods Shove Chapel 6:30-8:30 AM Followed by breakfast @ Wooglin's	
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<p style="font-size: 4em; color: red; writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Saharita</p> <p style="font-size: 2em; color: red; margin-top: 20px;">2009</p>	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
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	<p><b>Precepts Study Group</b> Sarah's house 1:00–3:00 PM <b>Steering Meeting</b> Sarah's house 3:00–5:00 PM</p>	<p><b>Meditation &amp; Prep for March All-Sangha Meeting</b> Shove Chapel 6:15–7:30 PM</p>		<p><b>Meditation</b> Shove Chapel 6:00–7:00 AM</p>			<p><b>Meditation, Four Periods</b> Shove Chapel 6:30–8:30 AM Followed by breakfast @ Wooglin's</p>
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<p><b>Mythopoetics Retreat</b></p>							
March 1	March 2	March 3	March 4	March 5	March 6	March 7	
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						<p><b>One-Day Retreat</b></p>	

## Donate to Springs Mountain Sangha

Springs Mountain Sangha engages in three weekly sittings, study groups, retreats, residencies for our holding teachers, *The Dharma Rag*, a Web site ([www.SMSZen.org](http://www.SMSZen.org)), and other communication media. Contributions from members and friends are the Sangha's sole financial resource. Your contributions are tax deductible in as much as Springs Mountain Sangha fits the definition of a church for charitable giving purposes. Please share the Dharma assets!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: (h) \_\_\_\_\_ (other) \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ (required for e-distribution)  
 Contribution Amount Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Checks should be made out to Springs Mountain Sangha c/o Robert King, Treasurer.

Springs Mountain Sangha is a member of The Open Source, in both the Soto and Rinzai traditions.

To learn more, visit our Web site—[www.smszen.org](http://www.smszen.org)—or contact us as follows: [Info@SMSZen.org](mailto:Info@SMSZen.org) (Wendy, our Webmaster) or [SMSDharmaRag@hotmail.com](mailto:SMSDharmaRag@hotmail.com) (your editor). You can join the Sangha and newsletter list-servers by sending a request to Wendy or to Lee.

## Great Reasons to Support Your Sangha

There are many great reasons to donate to Springs Mountain Sangha, and hopefully one will suit your fancy. Remember, this is *your* Sangha.

- **Donate to support Joan's work.** If you'd like to make a donation to thank Joan Sutherland, Roshi for her Dharma and to support her work, you can send it to her at P.O. Box 2368, Santa Fe, NM 87504. Or, send a donation to SMS with a note that it is for Joan.
- **Donate toward a facility.** While we benefit enormously from the warmhearted generosity of Colorado College, renting or owning our own facility would allow us to use our energies more fully. Retreats and other events would no longer require moving all the cushions, ritual supplies, food, et cetera. A facility is a long-term project; please help get it started.
- **Donate to support our operating costs.** Keeping the Sangha in business involves recurrent costs for teacher support, communications, gifts, ritual supplies, food for retreats and other events, study groups, and service activity—all the items needed for a nonprofit organization.
- **Donate to support our service activity.** The Service Committee budget supports our service work and makes possible Bodhisattva work in the larger community; send your donation to SMS with the notation "Service Committee."
- **The True Heart Scholarship Fund in Honor of Mitchell Goldbaum.** If you wish to make a gift in Mitch's memory, Mitch's sister, Joanne, has requested that gifts be made to Springs Mountain Sangha. You can just write "in memory of Mitchell Goldbaum" on the check. These funds are used for retreat scholarships.

**Thank you so very much!**

