
2023 YEAR IN REVIEW



Introduction

Dharma Zephyr is a community of Buddhist Vipassana (Insight) Meditation sitting groups in Northern Nevada. Our first meditation group was organized in the late 1980s near Carson City. Other groups organized in adjacent communities as the need arose. We now have several sitting groups meeting in Northern Nevada communities including Reno, Carson City, and Minden/Gardnerville. Some groups meet in person; however, due to the continuation of Covid some sitting groups still meet virtually by Zoom and some have hybrid meetings.

Dharma Zephyr Sanghas was incorporated under the Nonprofit Corporation Law of the State of Nevada in September 2006. In 2012 we changed our name to Dharma Zephyr Insight Meditation Community, and in 2016 we became exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code.

Mission Statement

Dharma Zephyr Insight Meditation Community, following the Theravadan Vipassana tradition, offers the Buddha's teachings on wisdom, ethical behavior, and

mindfulness to the Northern Nevada community. Activities include sitting meditation, reading groups, classes, and retreats.

Guiding Sangha

Dharma Zephyr has a board of directors, known as the Guiding Sangha. There are currently nine members on the Guiding Sangha, though it may have up to 11 members. The Guiding Sangha has four regular meetings a year and special meetings as required, which can be by email or other electronic media. 2023 Guiding Sangha members are:

- | | | |
|------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| • Chas Macquarie - President | • Kathy Schwerin | • Harry Ednie |
| • Susan Juetten - Secretary | • Christy Tews | • Colleen Lyons |
| • Denise Barclay - Treasurer | • Susan Antipa | • Anita Feuker |

Many bows to those serving on the Guiding Sangha. They provide a wide range of ideas and expertise that contributes to the smooth and skillful operation of the

sangha. It is a form of dana that often goes unrecognized, yet it is essential to the well-being of the larger sangha. Consider joining us at a meeting to see if you would like to add your voice and skills to the sangha.

Membership & Sitting Groups

Even with the pandemic we still have eight sitting groups included under the Dharma Zephyr umbrella.

Four in Carson City:

- Dharma Zephyr Sangha
- Middle Way Sangha
- West Wind Sangha
- Westside Home Sangha

Four in Reno:

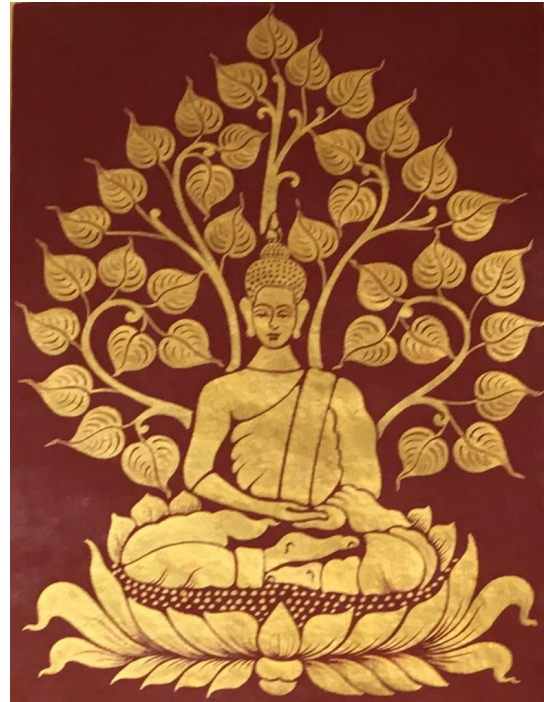
- Dharma Zephyr Sangha Reno
- Wednesday Night Reno Sangha
- Midtown Meditation
- Recovery Dharma

One in Douglas County:

- South Wind Sangha

Two at Lake Tahoe:

- South Lake Tahoe
- North Lake Tahoe



Our mailing list includes over 600 people who are interested in our activities. Not all of these people open every email, but a fair number open notices about retreats and programs. We send a welcome note to all new people who sign up for emails.

Details about all the sitting groups are on our website. <https://dharma-zephyr.org/>.

Below are reports on sitting group activities over the past year. Thank you to all the groups who submitted reports:

**Dharma Zephyr Sangha, Carson City;
Mondays at 6:45pm.**

Dharma Zephyr Sangha in Carson City entered its 34th year of continuous practice with six stalwart members. We finished reading Emptiness by Guy Armstrong in December and started our

study of *Dancing with Life* by Phillip Moffitt, which takes a deep dive into the Four Noble Truths. We've returned to our original practice of reading on our own and discussing at our meeting after our 40-minute meditation. We recite some version of the 5 precepts on every first Monday of the month, occasionally leading to a lively discussion, and end the meeting with some kind of metta practice.

**Middle Way Sangha, Carson City:
Mondays at 5:00pm.**

The Middle Way Sangha was created by Anne Macquarie and Susan Antipa in



October 2021.

Anne and Susan wanted to offer a sitting group that would begin and end early in the evening. Either

Anne, Susan, or an invited substitute facilitate the gathering. Following a 10-15-minute socialization opportunity, we meditate for 30 minutes, then read and discuss a book - currently *The Issue at Hand* by Gil Fronsdal. Sometimes a member will come with a different reading, discussion topic, or question, and the group sets aside the book for the evening. At the first meeting of each month, we read *The Five Precepts* with the opportunity for

questions, sharing, and discussion. The group's members have a wide range of experience and backgrounds: some are new to Buddhism, while others have practiced for many years. A few have also studied in the Tibetan or Zen traditions. The number attending varies greatly, usually between five and twelve.

Reno Monday Night Sangha: Mondays at 6:15pm.

We start with introductions if there are newcomers. Following introductions, we have announcements, mention upcoming retreats, and other events of interest. We then sit for 40 minutes, followed by a short break for folks to stretch, use facilities, etc. After the break, we read from the current book. Once the reading for the evening is complete, we pass the stick, allowing an opportunity for people to comment on either their meditation, or the reading. We then close with a metta, either provided by a member, or selected from the Metta Library we have on hand.

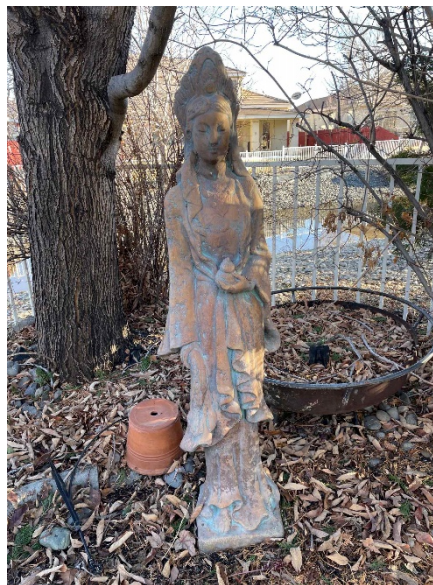
We are almost done with the current book, *The Other Shore*, an interesting investigation of the Heart Sutra, by Thich Nhat Hanh. We will probably select a new book on Monday, 1/8/24. Prior to *The Other Shore*, we read Stephen Batchelor's *Buddhism Without Beliefs*, and Pema Chodron's *Welcoming the Unwelcome*. Our average attendance is around 5 or 6 regulars, but there are a few who come pretty regularly, but, for any number of reasons, are unable to come every week. We are very fortunate to have a space in Midtown Mindfulness: thanks to Susan Stewart for locating the space, and thanks

to Elizabeth Dear and Faraaz Merchant of Midtown Mindfulness for their continuing support.

**Reno Wednesday Night Sangha:
Wednesdays at 6:30pm.**

This friendly Sangha began as a Dhamma Zephyr group, Mindful Movement, in 2015. During covid we set up a zoom meeting to stay in contact, share righteous gain, and support each other on the path. During the summer months we meet in person at a lovely spot at Bartley Ranch. Our main tradition is Theravadan, with a deep connection to the Thai Forest teachings, though teachings from all branches of Buddhism are discussed. Meetings begin with 10 minutes of socialization, followed by a dhamma reading that can be anywhere from 2 to 10 minutes long, we then sit in meditation for 30 minutes, followed by group discussion on the dhamma. The reading is rotated through the group on a voluntary basis and is selected by the week's volunteer with the goal of sharing useful insight. Group size has varied from 3 to 10 people, we currently have 6 regular attendees. This is a welcoming Sangha with deep feelings of metta; may all beings be at ease.

**South Wind Sangha: Thursdays at
5:30pm.**



We meet on Zoom starting with half-an-hour of qigong, followed by 30-minutes of silent meditation, 30-minutes of book study, and we close with a metta meditation. We have a group of about ten folks with a steady attendance of around six at each meeting.

We take the Plum Village, Thich Nhat Hanh, precepts the first Thursday of each month. We also begin each week's meditation with a reading of different versions of the Karaniya Metta Sutta. We continue to read Dhamma books and discuss the week's readings. We are

currently finishing up, The Path to Peace by Ayya Khema. Our next book will be Bhikkhu Analayo's new book, The Signless and the Deathless. In addition, we are reading, The Majjhima Nikaya, The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha, every several weeks. To assist us with our understanding and discussion, we listen to sutta study talks available from different teachers, like Bhikkhu Bodhi, Ajahn Brahm, Bhante

Vimalaramsi, etc. during the week before sangha.

We continue to be a small but very committed, supportive, caring, and open-hearted sangha. We welcome anyone who might like to join us at any time!

**South Lake Tahoe Sangha: Sundays at
5pm.**

We are a peer led group who started meeting in October 2017. We currently

have seven regular attendees. Our group tries to remember to read the Five Daily Reflections prior to a 40-minute meditation followed by reading and discussion from our selected books. Some of these authors are Ajahn Amaro, John Travis, Gil Fronsdal, Wes Nisker, Pema Chodron, Steven Batchelor, and Jack Kornfield. We also listen to and discuss Dharma audio talks and articles from dharmaseed.org and Spirit Rock. We read the precepts the 1st week of the month and close with a short metta. We are very grateful for Dharma Zephyr's support and to Unity of the Lake who have donated space for our practice since August 2018. All donations collected from our sangha are donated to Unity.

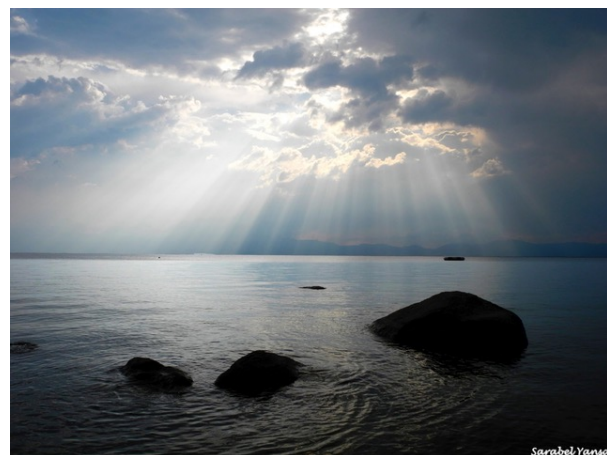
North Lake Tahoe Sangha: Tuesdays at 7pm.

Our sitting group is relatively new and meets in Kings Beach. We have a core group of three and another three who attend occasionally. We start with 30 minutes of silent seated meditation followed by 30 minutes of Dharma talk/discussion. Some recent topics include Right Speech, No Self, and What It Means to Be a Bodhisattva. We also listen to audio talks and reading selections from Joseph Goldstein, Tara Brach, Gil Fronsdal, or similar Buddhist teachers--and sometimes "Buddhism-adjacent" resources from outside the world of Buddhism. After our meditation, we typically read or listen to something and then discuss. We are now starting a rotation in which each of the three regular members will lead the Dharma discussion for a few meetings in a row.

West Wind Sangha, Carson City: Wednesdays at 6pm.

This sangha has been going since 2003. We still offer a hybrid Zoom link and usually have 1 person on Zoom, occasionally 2, although those on Zoom sometimes have difficulty hearing what all the in-person folks are saying. We typically have 6-9 people attending in person, occasionally up to 12 or down to 4. We are a peer group with no central leader, and we always enjoy the new energy when newcomers attend, whether they are beginners or experienced meditators, and we are always happy to provide guidance for new meditators.

We start with a 30-minute sitting meditation, or an optional indoor walking meditation. Then we read from a book and/or discuss the dharma, and end with



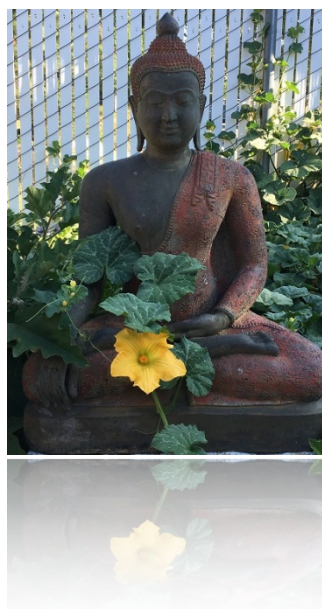
someone reading an inspiring dharma poem, excerpt of their choice, or sometimes a traditional loving-kindness recitation. In the past we have periodically recited the 5 precepts and are now probably due to renew that practice. We often have interesting dharma discussions with most participants sharing their own personal

experiences. Sometimes the discussions are triggered by readings and other times the discussions begin organically without reading. We have read many books out loud at sangha and make our way very slowly through them, as the real juice is usually in the discussions that come out of the readings. Currently, the sangha is doing a month-by-month discussion on each step of the Noble 8-Fold Path.

**Carson Westside Home Sangha:
Wednesdays at 4:45pm.**

We set two bells, one for 25 minutes and one for 55 minutes. We start with a 25-minute sit. Our current book is *The Issue at Hand* by Gill Fronsdal. We read sections and then discuss the reading. It takes us a long time to get through books because we

don't always read from the books. We often have discussions that start with a question or a recent experience of one of us. When the second bell goes off, we wrap up and offer one of the brahma viharas. We usually have 3-6 people, though the attendance in winter is a bit less, and in summer it can be a bit more. When possible, we sit in the backyard. At the beginning of this sangha's life, we did read a version of the precepts monthly. We have not done this in a while, but we have interest in starting that up again.



Financial Report

2023 DZIMC income and expenses

<u>Income</u>	
Donations and misc. income	1,771
Residential retreat income	37,534
Non-residential dana	3,615
Sitting Group dana	<u>4,033</u>
Total Income	46,953
Net Income (Loss)	(1,219)

<u>Expenses</u>	
Operating expenses	9,117
Residential retreat expenses	36,560
Non-residential expenses	1,689
Donations	<u>806</u>
Total Expenses	48,172

Balance Sheet - Assets

Checking Account	6,711
Savings (MM) Account	4,079
PayPal	4,418
Certificate of Deposit	<u>10,147</u>
Total Assets	25,355

Balance Sheet - Liabilities

Scholarship Fund set-aside	<u>3,114</u>
Total Liabilities	3,114

Please see the financial statements for full details posted on the DZIMC Website at dharmaazephyr.org

In 2023 income and expenses were similar to 2022. This is because our biggest income and expense items are our residential retreats and we were able to continue to hold most retreats in-person. The figures above show a net loss of \$1,219 but the flow of income and

\$1,926. This covered roughly 1/3 of our operating expenses.

Our money market savings account went down to \$4,079 because we bought a \$10,000 6-month CD that earns significantly more interest than our MM account. The idea of the savings and MM accounts is to have accounts that are earmarked for savings that may be used in the future for potential big (or even medium) ticket items that are outside our normal financial operations. These might include: increased outreach to the community; a major overhaul of the website; an unexpected loss on a retreat; hiring part-time help; or an annual budget shortfall. As noted above, our annual net income or loss is partly a matter of timing since certain retreat costs are paid for in the year prior to the income being received in the following year.

Once again, deep bows to our hard-working treasurer, Denise Barclay. Since we started offering residential retreats several years ago, we have a considerable amount of money passing through the books and it is important to account for this properly.



expenses for retreats extends from one calendar year to the next and it is important to remember that the income or loss at the end of the calendar year is a snapshot of the financial picture on a particular day - December 31. This snapshot shows our residential retreats made a net income of \$974 and our non-residential retreats had a net income of

Budget for 2024

<u>Income</u>		<u>Expenses</u>	
Donations	500	Operating	9,300
Residential	46,000	Residential	42,000
Non-residential	3,700	Non-residential	1,700
Sitting Group	<u>4,000</u>	Donations	<u>800</u>
Total Income	54,200	Total Expenses	53,800
Net Income		400	

This budget is based on the assumption that residential retreats will continue to be in-person and non-residential retreats will be a mix of in-person and virtual retreats.

The DZ Center

Thanks to the generosity of Vicki Melhuish and Mary Kay Wagner, who own Sierra Foot & Ankle, we continue to have the use of the studio area for sitting groups, non-residential retreats, classes, movie nights and the Buddha's Enlightenment Tea. In lieu of a fixed rent we pay Vicki and Mary Kay dana as we can afford it. The space has been decorated with an altar and several nice pieces of Buddhist art. We have chairs,



cushions, a bench or two and a Zoom setup for hybrid meetings.

Retreats and Scholarships

Three new members joined the retreat committee in 2023, which met a total of four times to manage the current year retreats and begin the planning for 2024 and 2025. This year's retreats at Camp Galilee included two Denise Barclay three-day retreats, a long weekend with Dori Langevin, and Santikaro for five days in August. Daylongs started with the ever-popular ReTreat from the Holidays in January, and continued with John Travis in April, Amita Schmidt in May, Ayya Santacitta in September, and Vance Pryor in October.

The dedicated committee members included Jazz Gouveia, Deborah Stevenson, Denise Barclay, Tom Gray, Susan Sara Priest, Kathy Schwerin, Christy Tews,

Susan Antipa, Anita Feuker, and Robin Novak, Nichole Whisman, and Mary Kay Wagner. This group, along with Renate Massing and Susan Juetten, planned and managed a total of six non-residential and four residential retreats. The committee welcomes new members who would like to help organize and manage retreats for 2024 and 2025. If you are interested, please contact Denise Barclay, our volunteer coordinator, at denise@dharmaazephyr.org.

Additional team members include: Shannon Hataway, DZ's webmaster; Stephanie Coleman, DZ's email blaster; and Harry Ednie our sound roadie. The Committee is grateful for the essential work they do!

Attendance

Total attendance for the non-residential retreats was 218 (183 in-person, 35 via Zoom). Total attendance for the residential retreats was 96. Total attendance for the year was 314, an increase over 2022.

Financials

The non-residential retreats had a net income of about \$1,926. The residential retreats generated a net income of about \$974.

Scholarships

In 2023 DZ awarded 4 scholarships for \$1,725 and took in \$805 in scholarship dana, so the scholarship account decreased to \$3,114 at the end of 2023.

2024 and Beyond

For 2024, the Retreat Committee has four confirmed non-residential retreats



featuring familiar teachers Heather Sundberg and Santikaro, along with our local team of Kathy Schwerin, Christy Tews, and Denise Barclay, who will be leading two ReTreats from the Holidays in January.

Planned residential retreats include Denise Barclay in February, Vance Pryor in April, John Travis in August, Leigh Brasington in November - all at Camp Galilee on the shore of Lake Tahoe.

Many bows to the Retreat Committee, who put in a great deal of work to recruit teachers, organize retreats and venues, and make the whole endeavor run smoothly.

Vision Action Committee

The Vision Action Committee, formed after the 2018 visioning meeting to come up with ideas to better connect our wider community, did not have an official meeting in 2023. However, DZ's goal to increase our outreach to include more diversity in age, gender, and ethnicity in the DZ Community, was moved forward through the efforts of Denise Barclay, our new Volunteer Coordinator, who posted more regularly on social media throughout 2023.

Social Events Coordinating Committee

We held two movie nights at the DZ Center. In April we showed the movie *Wandering but Not Lost*, about the Tibetan monk Mingyur Rinpoche's 4-1/2 year wanderings in India and Nepal. In December we showed *Enlightenment Guaranteed*, a German movie about two brothers' adventures in Japan trying to gain enlightenment at a Japanese monastery. In 2024, Susan Juetten will be heading up this reactivated committee and initial plans for social events include more movie nights, a summer picnic, and a Buddha's Enlightenment Tea. Susan is looking for volunteers to be on the committee, so if you are interested, email Susan at artemesiaacres@gmail.com with the Subject line "Events Coordinating Committee".

Classes



Deborah Stevenson taught a six-week qigong class in February and March.

Website & Other Outreach

We continue to update our website to show the latest information on sitting groups, retreats and classes. We reorganized the Resources section in 2020 and we continue to add more content. In 2021 we added a section for online community gratitude journaling. Retreatants appreciate the ability to register and pay for residential retreats online. Denise Barclay has been working with Shannon Hataway, our webmaster, to improve the accessibility of the website and make it easier to find information on it.

Visit us at <http://dharmazephyr.org/> or through our Facebook page.

Plans for 2024

Denise Barclay continues to be our Volunteer Coordinator, working on a volunteer basis. The Guiding Sangha felt that to make significant progress on some organizational and outreach projects we needed someone to coordinate the work. Denise stepped up to fill that role and will continue to do it through 2024.

We will continue our outreach to the public through our website and email alerts to let the public know about the wonderful meditation retreats, classes, and sitting opportunities that Dharma Zephyr provides.

We hope to resume social events to allow members from different sitting groups to get to know folks outside their regular circle of practitioners. Initial plans include

more movie nights, a summer picnic, and a Buddha's Enlightenment Tea.

Finally, I want to once again express my heart-felt thanks to all those who have served a role in making Dharma Zephyr the vibrant, mindful community it has become. Our sitting groups have expanded, and we managed to hold many retreats in person and others as a hybrid or remotely. Well done all of you!

Chas Macquarie
Guiding Sangha President