

Community Meeting Minutes 7/21/24

Gakyil members present:

Marsha Ellison, Alex Daggett (in person)
Ellen Halbert, Martha Tack (online)

Community members present:

In person: Nancy Paris, Tatiana Dorofieieva, Bernard Fauques, Fil Valiunas, Michael Sullivan, Diane Campbell, Michael Katz, Kathleen Fekete, Lynn Newdome, Naomi Zeitz, Gerry Steinberg, Efreem Marder, Marit Cranmer, Gabriel Marder, Lauri Marder, David Leskowitz, Emily Luhrs, James Smith, Dominik Niceva, Helena Bankovic, Carisa O'Kelly, Bodhi Krause, Mark Alton-Follansbee, Vern Harrington, Larry Howe.

Online: Robert Kragen, Stephen Gould, Paula Barry, Cindy Thiebeau, Jamie Peters

Guru Yoga

Agenda:

Red Report: The report was emailed to members before the meeting, and was summarized and shown on screen for members.

- Red Gakyil asked again for volunteers to help with tech support for retreats, programs and online practices. Without additional help we must limit our activities offered.
- We are falling behind in maintenance of our facilities because of insufficient resources and too few people to do what is needed. Several problems discussed in the red report have been developing for many years but were put off because of this lack; but, delay has only made the problems worse and more expensive. Red relies primarily on two members who are each trying to do the job of at least two people. Red Gakyil asked members to brainstorm ways to streamline activities, reduce infrastructure and expenses, and increase income.
- Dark retreat cabin, currently unusable, is an example of the consequences of deferred maintenance. The visit to the cabin, by local volunteers identified through the dark retreat questionnaire, was described and next steps listed. The report of this visit is included in the red report. The owner of the property where the cabin is located was reported to be eager to have it used again by the community into the future. Some members expressed doubts about the possibility of renovating it. Others expressed concern about maintaining the purity of Rinpoche's Yangti transmission. One member suggested we listen together to recorded Yangti teachings given by Rinpoche and offered to coordinate this. The member also said Rinpoche designated a spot for the Yangti cabin on Khandroling and suggested we find it and consider a new cabin there.
- A member asked for information about maintenance issues and easy ways to get involved and help. Red Gakyil will email members with priority needs and several ways to help.
- Various ideas for use of the space near the pond cabin that was opened up by tree cutting were presented. One member suggested new trees be planted asap (this fall);

another suggested placing a sign to indicate the place where Rinpoche placed the original dance mandala, and also adding a solar mandala in that area. The memorial garden for members who have passed away is also tentatively planned nearby.

Blue report: The report was emailed to members before the meeting, and was summarized and shown on screen for members.

- SMS teacher Lynn Newdome reported on her promising efforts to build programs for new people, especially ongoing Shine, Dzogchen meditation class. She asked for volunteers to help with postering and several members offered help. She also asked experienced practitioners to attend occasionally to promote fruitful conversations about practice. Lynn described her plans to collaborate with the membership coordinator to welcome new members, offer basic courses on practices, and provide information on what we offer. She suggested offering Rushen for people new to transmission and asked members to help new people at practices.
- Memorial garden for members who have passed away is planned, the location to be determined. Blue gakyil explained that the focus on Shitro in SSR was connected to several members' recent passing and the memorial service scheduled during SSR.
- Blue gakyil stated intention to bring more international teachers next year. One member asked about contacting Yeshe re: our activities and his advice. Blue said Yeshe was asked to be the spiritual advisor of Tsegyalgar but so far nothing has come of this. One member offered to facilitate communication with Yeshe's team.

Yellow report: The report was emailed to members before the meeting and was summarized and shown onscreen for members.

- Yellow gakyil said we have money in the bank, had a successful auction during SSR, and our payments to Dzamlingar for Tsegyalgar house are complete through 2025.
- Yellow gakyil said we are in a "decent" financial position. Financial statements are posted on the website and members were encouraged to email with any questions. Members raised no questions during the meeting.

Dedication of merit