

**Shramadana Project Meeting Minutes**  
**Triangle Insight Meditation Community**  
18 November 2015

**Attendees:** Daya Breckenridge, Cathy Cole, Tom Howlett, Gordon Livermore, Gerri McGuire, Mary Mudd, Leah Rutchick, Kathy Shipp, Barbara Shumannfang, Howard Staab, Ron Vereen, Karen Ziegler

**Mission:** The Shramadana Project (SP) is a volunteer initiative that has been organized to address some of the needs within the sangha, as well as to provide outreach to the community-at-large. The mission of the Shramadana Project is to explore, develop, and implement initiatives both within the sangha and the community-at-large.

Following brief introductions and a review of the general role and mission of the Shramadana Project (SP), we discussed the following:

**Activities to Date**

Two types of activities have been carried out by the SP over the last two and a half years:

- Two residential retreats were planned and held.
- Ron and some volunteers provided mindfulness training at the Durham Crisis Response Center (DCRC).

Some other activities in the community were suggested but never materialized. These included a book drive, helping seniors stay in their homes and volunteers for the Ronald McDonald House.

**Current Needs**

1. **2016 Residential Retreat at Avila** – this will be a 3-night retreat over Memorial Day weekend. Volunteers to work on planning and managing the retreat include Gordy Livermore, Mary Mudd, Leah Rutchick, Howard Staab, Ron Vereen, and Karen Ziegler.
2. **Additional Mindfulness Training at DCRC** – Ron will contact the center to discuss scheduling 5 weeks of basic mindfulness instruction. Volunteers interested in participating in this include Daya Breckenridge, Cathy Cole, Tamara Share, Kathy Shipp, and Ron Vereen.
3. **Insight Dialogue Retreat Jan. 1 & 2** – anyone who is interested in assisting Phyllis Hicks with this retreat should contact Tamara Share at [tshare@hrc-pa.com](mailto:tshare@hrc-pa.com) or 919-442-1118.
4. **Upcoming Holiday Party and Similar Functions** – we discussed having one or two people designated as helpers for a set time period for these types of functions. Barbara Shumannfang and Karen Ziegler volunteered to assist with the set-up/clean-up of the holiday party on Dec. 16.

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5. **Assistance to the Episcopal Center** – Ron informed us that the covenant for the center calls for support from our sangha by offering needed work such as painting, clean-up, etc. Ron will follow-up with the head of the center on this requirement.

### **Other Ideas**

1. **Support to the Community-at-Large** – several ideas for volunteer activities outside the sangha were suggested. Tom Howlett is especially interested in opportunities to go into schools and intervene with at risk children. He is also interested in helping persons leaving incarceration to reintegrate with society. Cathy Cole told us about *Benevolence Farm* in Graham. The farm has some women in residence who have recently left prison.

Howard Staab and Karen Ziegler are interested in volunteering in these two areas, also.

We discussed how to find out what types of support/programs already exist to help these types of individuals as well as others in need in our community. Suggested resources are the *Volunteer Center of Durham*, *Durham Friends Meeting* and *Church World Services*. Gerri McGuire related that *Church World Services* has short-term programs available to help individuals and families in need of help.

Barbara Shumannfang volunteered to compile a list of programs/agencies/groups and will prepare a write-up about them for the January newsletter. This needs to be completed by Dec. 15.

2. **Movie Night** – Karen Ziegler suggested movies could be offered periodically at the Episcopal Center.

Other ideas included spreading these suggestions within the sangha by word of mouth, creating a listserv/group to use for communicating ongoing and short-term volunteer opportunities, finding ways for our sangha to connect with other faith groups. Ron informed us that TIMC does connect and communicate with other Buddhist groups in the area and discusses pooling some resources.

Ron suggested a guiding principle: Be responsive to what emerges.

### **Future Meetings**

We agreed that we will continue to hold our meetings on Wednesdays following TIMC meetings. Our next meeting is tentatively scheduled for January 13 at 8:00pm.