

# The Mountain Hermitage



P.O. Box 807  
Ranchos de Taos, NM · 87557  
505-758-0633 ·  
hermit@laplaza.org  
www.mountainhermitage.org

Fall 2007

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## Hermitage to Receive Major Gift, Plans Spring Launch

An anonymous donor's pledge of approximately \$200,000 to support *The Mountain Hermitage* vision has triggered an earnest search for real estate, reports *Hermitage* Board President Jean Smith. The pledge monies will be secured in early spring 2008. Properties of 15 to 50 acres no more than half an hour from Taos are being considered. Construction would start with a small teacher house, three or four two-room meditation cottages with shared baths, and a meditation hall that would accommodate 30 yogis.

The Board hopes that this initial pledge will inspire other major gifts to underwrite the projected \$1,000,000 cost to bring the above initial stages of the project to completion. (See vision statement, back).

**Contact: 505-758-0633, or hermit@laplaza.org, or write to *The Mountain Hermitage*,\* PO Box 807, Ranchos de Taos, NM 87557 for more information.**

\*The Mountain Hermitage is a 501C3 non-profit charitable organization. All donations are tax deductible as allowed by law.

## Joseph Goldstein Offers Benefit Dharma Evening

If your dream was to experience dozens of dharma offerings from a wise and beloved teacher in one short evening, that dream would have come beautifully true on June 8, 2007. In the great hall of San Geronimo Lodge in Taos, NM, which has also served as the virtual home of *The Mountain Hermitage* for three annual retreats, Vipassana teacher Joseph Goldstein guided meditation for 80 attendees, and in the following question and answer period offered teachings ranging from attentiveness, knowing, and equanimity to the meaning of love, intimacy, and impermanence. All proceeds benefit *The Mountain Hermitage*.



Joseph Goldstein

*Calm is a state that is the opposite of restlessness. Equanimity is the quality of mind of impartiality... the equanimous mind holds everything, and in that impartiality is the chance to learn.*

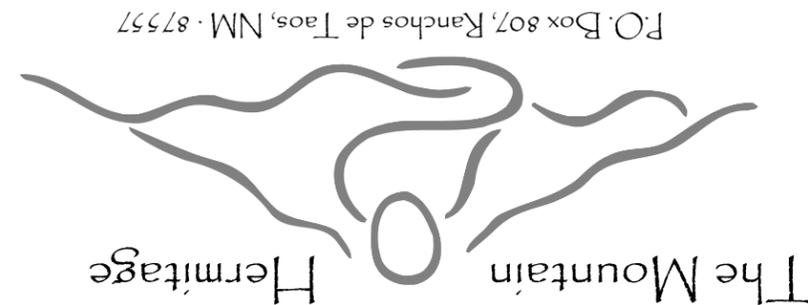
*When you realize the empty or selfless nature of consciousness, the energy to bring about the good of others dawns uncontrived and effortless. When we take ourselves out of the way, what is left is love and compassion.*

*Real spiritual maturity happens when the relative and ultimate levels of truth are known as expressions of each other. When we understand truth on the ultimate level, we can engage in the world with much greater freedom.*

In the easy, conversational style for which he is so well known, Joseph spoke of the direct relevance of the Buddha's teachings to our daily lives. His first experience of meditation: "It was an amazing first five minutes," he said. "For the first time I saw there was a way to look at the mind, instead of looking out at the world through it. When people first get a taste of watching their minds, the discovery is tremendously compelling."

As he generously shared his own life

NOTE: The evening with Joseph Goldstein is available as a free download from *The Mountain Hermitage* site [www.mountainhermitage.org](http://www.mountainhermitage.org). CDs also available.



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## Meet the Teachers for the Spring and Summer 2008 Hermitage



### MARCIA ROSE

Marcia Rose is the founding and guiding teacher of *The Mountain Hermitage* and founding teacher of Taos Mountain Sangha. She has been studying and practicing Buddhist teachings and meditation with Asian and Western teachers since 1970, primarily in the Vipassana-Theravada (Path of the Elders) tradition. Her own teaching reflects a strong influence from the Burmese Mahasi Vipassana and the Pa-Auk Forest Monastery lineages. She has also studied and practiced in the Dzogchen Tibetan Buddhist tradition with Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche, Nyoshul Khen Rinpoche, and Tsoknyi Rinpoche. Marcia was resident teacher for staff at the Insight Meditation Society (IMS) in Barre, MA from 1991-1995. She is sometimes one of the teachers for the annual three-month retreat at IMS, and currently teaches at The Forest Refuge in Barre, MA as a visiting teacher. Marcia also teaches Vipassana and Metta retreats in other U.S. and international venues, and is dedicated to offering these ancient and timeless teachings in ways that make them accessible and authentic for contemporary culture.



### ANNIE NUGENT

Annie Nugent returns for her third year as visiting teacher for *The Mountain Hermitage* spring practice period. Annie has studied and practiced in the Theravada and Tibetan traditions since 1979 under the guidance of a range of teachers including Sayadaw U Pandita, Tulku Akong Rinpoche and various western teachers. After leaving South Africa, her country of origin, she lived in England for some years, and has recently emigrated to the U.S., making her home now in Barre, Massachusetts. Annie was the resident teacher for staff at the Insight Meditation Society from 1999-2003, and has since taught elsewhere, including the annual IMS three-month retreat and The Forest Refuge. Her teaching style aims to reveal how our lives are opportunities to develop a clear understanding of the Truth.

"Because I have been financially challenged all these years with medical bills higher than my disability income, it would be impossible to attend such a retreat without financial assistance. The very quality of my life is greatly improved, the ease with which I face my challenges is greatly increased and the heart with which I encounter the world is tenderly softened in loving kindness... all thanks to your generosity."

- Scholarship Yogi, 2007 Retreat



### Our Vision

*The Mountain Hermitage* will be a small retreat center dedicated to the inner cultivation and outer manifestation of wisdom, lovingkindness, compassion, and peace. This home for long-term spiritual practice according to the tradition of Theravada Buddhism will be built in a quiet and beautiful mountain setting in the Taos, New Mexico, area. In addition to cottages where qualified, experienced Dharma students can devote themselves to intensive meditation practice for two weeks or longer, there will be a wheelchair-accessible cottage and cottages dedicated for practice for monastics, those engaged in social service work, and lay Dharma teachers. Scholarship aid will be available for those who may not otherwise be able to attend and to promote diversity among retreatants. On Sunday morning a particular area of *The Hermitage* will be open to the larger community for meditation, a Dharma talk, and discussion. *The Mountain Hermitage* will be built and operated on the principles of sustainable energy.



## A Message from Our Guiding Teacher

Dear Friends,

I write to you today with a joyful heart. We have just concluded our third and very fine year of offering two-week to month-long meditation retreats for experienced Dharma students. Thanks to the small foundation which has continuously granted scholarship funds for *Hermitage* yogis we have offered substantial scholarship help to many people over these three years. On December 9th we will close out this year with one more offering, an evening of guitar music given as a Benefit for the *Hermitage* by highly accomplished and acclaimed guitarist Carl Bernstein.

Thanks to a generous gift the *Hermitage* will receive in early spring of 2008, we will begin the careful process of moving toward finding the right spot here in the Taos, NM, area for manifesting the original vision of *The Mountain Hermitage*. While this gift will enable us to begin the process, we need your help to complete these important first steps, and then to bring the project to completion.

Please consider joining our widening circle of joy through your own generosity. Together we will build a home for experienced Dharma students to deepen their practice through extended periods of meditation here in the mountains of northern New Mexico.

On behalf of the *Hermitage* Board, I offer a bow of deep gratitude to all those who have taught and practiced at *Hermitage* retreats and to all of our donors and supporters. Your participation and help continues to inspire and strengthen us as we work to realize the vision of *The Mountain Hermitage*.

With metta,   
Guiding Teacher



Meditation Hall - San Geronimo Lodge

from April 2 to April 30, 2008. A limited number of two-week options, April 2-16 or April 16-30, will be available. The retreat will be taught by Marcia Rose, *Mountain Hermitage* guiding teacher, who will be joined by returning Dharma teacher Annie Nugent. Annie shared guiding teacher responsibilities with Marcia Rose for the 2005 and 2006 retreats.

The Spring Retreat will again be held in the beautiful, spacious, and comfortable San Geronimo Lodge located three miles east of Taos, New Mexico. All yogis will be housed in single rooms.

## Reflections on Practice from Marcia Rose

Equanimity - *Upekka* in the Pali spiritual language (the language that the Buddha's original teachings were first transcribed into) is a powerful force in our practice, a powerful force in the whole of our life. It manifests as the equipoise, the balance or equilibrium between the opposing forces in the mind of the desired and the undesired. This equipoise of equanimity offsets the weightiness of greed and aversion. It's that point of balance in the middle of the see-saw of life.

As equanimity blossoms it shows up in our practice and our lives as fearlessness, great strength, and ease within the mind and heart, keeping us balanced and impartial in the midst of it all.

As awakening beings, one way we can practice this essential quality of mind/heart is as one of the Brahma Viharas/Divine Abidings. The classical Theravada phrase used in this form of equanimity practice is this:

*"I am/you are the inalienable heir or owner of my/your karma (my/your 'deeds' of thought, speech, and bodily actions). My/your happiness or suffering depends upon my/your actions (of thought, speech, and body), not upon my wishes."*

As it is done in the Brahma Vihara practice, one silently repeats this phrase over and over to oneself, staying very present and mindfully aware, but not getting caught or seduced into the stories that may show up. After directing the phrase to yourself for a few days, you can then slowly over time begin to bring in other individuals, such as someone who has been of benefit to you in your life, a dear friend, a family member, and even a difficult person. As you go on with this practice a very natural reflection and understanding will begin to blossom, not through discursive thought but simply through the process of the practice itself and your growing trust in its power.

You might consider trying this practice for 10 or 15 minutes each day, keeping an open mind and heart towards the process and its fruits.

## Hermitage Announces Fourth Annual Spring Retreat

*The Mountain Hermitage* has opened registration for its fourth annual one-month Spring Retreat,

from April 2 to

Again this year, *The Mountain Hermitage* has received a generous scholarship grant dedicated to support the Spring Retreat. The grant will be applied to scholarship aid for low-income people of color, service professionals, lay Dharma teachers, and those who otherwise would not be able to attend. There is no fee for monastics.

### Sliding scale fees

4 weeks: \$1,550 (low) - \$1,700 (mid) - \$1,850 (actual cost)

2 weeks: \$775 (low) - \$850 (mid) - \$925 (actual cost)

**Special Scholarship Fees** 4 weeks: \$600, 2 weeks: \$300

\*\*Applications for the April 2 -April 30, 2008 retreat are requested by January 15, 2008.\*\* Information, Practice Guidelines, Application and Scholarship Forms are available at [www.mountainhermitage.org](http://www.mountainhermitage.org) or Email [hermit@laplaza.org](mailto:hermit@laplaza.org), or call 505-758-0633.

## Venerable Sayadaw Vivekananda Offers Rare Retreat Experience



The Vallecitos Mountain Refuge in northern New Mexico was the Shangri La setting for an extraordinary 20-day Vipassana retreat sponsored by *The Mountain Hermitage* and led by the Venerable Sayadaw Vivekananda from July 6 to July 25, 2007. The deep stillness and pristine beauty of the Refuge invited a deepening mindfulness to every nuance of breathing, walking, and simple daily activities. The retreat, attended by 24 experienced yogis housed in tents, cabins and yurts nestled in the aspen and pine forest, was the final stop on Ven. Vivekananda's 2007 Western teaching tour. He is the resident teacher at Panditarama Lumbini International Vipassana Meditation Center in Lumbini, Nepal.

## Guitarist Carl Bernstein Presents Benefit Concert on December 9

The Mabel Dodge Luhan House in Taos, NM, will host a benefit concert by guitarist Carl Bernstein at 5:00 p.m. on the evening of Sunday, December 9, 2007. Proceeds will benefit *The Mountain Hermitage*. A professional musician since the age of 18, Carl studied with renowned guitarists Julian Bream and Andres Segovia, among others. In addition to his many regular solo classical guitar concert performances, he is currently working with a jazz ensemble and accompanying a variety of singers. Four albums of Bernstein's music are available, reflecting his diverse repertoire which includes classical, original compositions, improvisation, and popular selections. Dinner discounts for post-concert dining available at a few local restaurants, TBA.

*Suggested donation per person is \$20 at the door. No one will be turned away for lack of funds.*

**Donor Opportunity: Sayadaw Vivekananda's detailed opening instructions will be printed in booklet form that can be ordered from *The Mountain Hermitage*, with 50 copies sent with gratitude to Ven. Vivekananda's Meditation Center in Lumbini, Nepal. A charitable gift of \$300 is needed to underwrite this worthy project.**

If you'd like to help, contact us at [hermit@laplaza.org](mailto:hermit@laplaza.org), call 505-758-0633 or write to *The Mountain Hermitage*, P.O. Box 807, Rancho de Taos, NM 87557.

Ven. Vivekananda's warm and engaging style of presenting the Dhamma, combined with his precise and encouraging way of working with individuals in daily practice interviews, provided a rich period of intensive practice. Very clear Dhamma talks on the Gradual Path of Training followed by question and answer periods were given each evening in the majestic wood and stone lodge, lit only by oil lamps and the setting sun, and visited by the resident free-roaming horses, who often looked in at the lodge windows as if to hear the Dhamma. Ven. Vivekananda and *Mountain Hermitage* Guiding Teacher Marcia Rose each offered daily practice interviews for all the yogis, and Marcia offered the closing evening Dhamma talk.

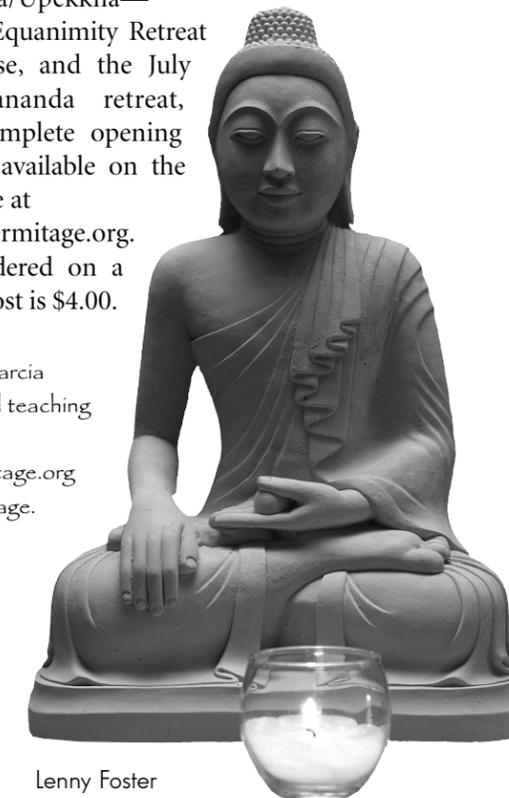
The monastic practice of not eating after the noon hour was greatly supported by the delicious and satisfying early morning and mid-day meals offered by retreat cooks Beth Waldron and John Kane.

NOTE: We are delighted to share Sayadaw Vivekananda's enthusiasm and encouragement for *The Mountain Hermitage* project. Charitable donations of any amount are gratefully received.

## Treasury of Dharma Offerings Available on Website

If you couldn't be there, you can still enjoy the teachings—and if you were there, you can enjoy them all over again! Free downloads of talks and guided sits from the Spring '07 retreat with Marcia Rose and Patricia Genoud Feldman, the June Metta/Upekkha—LovingKindness/Equanimity Retreat with Marcia Rose, and the July Sayadaw Vivekananda retreat, including his complete opening instructions, are available on the *Hermitage* website at [www.mountainhermitage.org](http://www.mountainhermitage.org). CDs may be ordered on a dana basis. Our cost is \$4.00.

NOTE: For Marcia Rose's international teaching schedule please see [www.mountainhermitage.org](http://www.mountainhermitage.org) Guiding Teacher page.



Lenny Foster