



# Insight Meditation Society

Sangha News - March 2012

## Great Renunciation, Great Realization and Great Brave Mind



*From Bob Agoglia, Executive Director:*

Earlier this year at [New York Insight](#), IMS co-founder and guiding teacher [Sharon Salzberg](#) taught on the three characteristics of the Buddha's enlightenment: his Great Renunciation, Great Realization and Great Brave Mind.

I was intrigued by this theme, and asked Sharon to tell us more about what these characteristics represent and how they can guide our own lives.



Listen [here](#) to her description of how we all can live in greater alignment with our own potential for deep insight and boundless compassion.

## Fundraising Goal Met!

Another amazing milestone has been reached in our project to construct a new Retreat Center dormitory and to renovate the Catskills. Thanks to the generous support of many of you, our major fundraising effort is over - we have reached our \$2,350,000 goal!

Through the power of this generosity, our vision of providing a single room for every IMS retreatant will be brought to fruition. Each person practicing here will benefit from a private space to meditate and reflect, to enjoy a sense of refuge, or to attend to various medical and physical needs.

Our plans are on schedule to break ground in early September and to complete the entire project by the middle of next year. Site surveying was undertaken in late 2011, a preliminary yet thorough cost estimate was recently finished, and architectural and engineering specifications are being finalized right now.

As this planning phase moves into actual construction in the fall, we'll be keeping everyone updated with developments. It's been a profound experience to witness our sangha's enthusiasm for this endeavor.



### News Worth Noting

**New Forest Refuge Schedule** - On April 1, the 2013 [schedule of teachers](#) for the Forest Refuge will be posted on our website. Applications for a personal retreat next year will be accepted from this date on.



**Recipes Available Online!** Over the years, the IMS cooks have received many appreciative comments about our delicious vegetarian meals. And on closing days, retreatants often ask for our recipes. While we've been happy to oblige, these are designed to serve the 140 people that we usually cook for, making them somewhat cumbersome to modify for home use. At long last, an initial sampling of favorite recipes, adapted to serve six people, is now available on our [site](#). More of your favorite dishes will follow over time.



## Dharma Updates

**Meditation in the Media** - An article on [mindful eating](#) on the *New York Times* site drew a [response](#) from IMS retreatant Robert Wright, writer and senior editor at *The Atlantic*.



The current Spring issue of [Tricycle](#) magazine features the nine-minute daily meditation practice that IMS co-founder and guiding teacher Joseph Goldstein discussed in the Fall 2011 issue of our *Insight Newsletter*.

**LGBTIQ Retreat at Garrison** - IMS is proudly co-sponsoring [Coming Home](#): A Mindfulness Meditation Weekend for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer Communities at Garrison Institute. Larry Yang and Maddy Klyne, who teach regularly at IMS, will lead this weekend retreat, April 13-15, 2012.

### Program Highlights



At the **Forest Refuge**, Teacher-in-Residence Sky Dawson gave a talk this past January titled [Compassion is a Natural Response to Suffering](#).

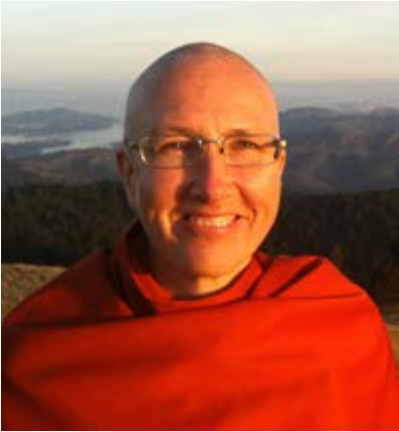


At the **Retreat Center** (L-R) Lila Kate Wheeler and Sharda Rogell led a weekend course in February, Living an Awakened Life.

**Space Available** - If you're interested in a [personal retreat](#) at the **Forest Refuge**, we have openings starting in August. Apply [here](#) for August and September, when Annie Nugent and Sky will be guiding retreatants' practice. If you have any questions please [email](#) or give us a call at [978-355-2063](#).



At the **Retreat Center**, we are looking forward to the arrival of two nuns, Ayya Anandabodhi Bhikkhuni and Ayya Santacitta Bhikkhuni, who will be leading our annual Monastic Retreat, April 6-15. This year's theme will be [Wisdom and Compassion are the Gifts of Mindfulness](#).



*Ayya Anandabodhi Bhikkhuni*



*Ayya Santacitta Bhikkhuni*

Immediately following this course, Rebecca Bradshaw and Greg Scharf will teach [Kindhearted Awareness](#), April 17-22. Then in May, Howard Cohn and Lila Kate Wheeler will offer a retreat titled [The Buddha's Way to Happiness](#), May 16-20.

Next in the schedule will be the annual [Lovingkindness and Insight Meditation Retreat](#) taught by Michele McDonald, Rebecca Bradshaw, Greg Scharf and Jesse Maceo Vega-Frey. [Part 1](#) (May 25 -June 1) focuses on metta practice and [Part 2](#) (June 1-10) on vipassana.



## Sangha Stories

We value your stories highlighting your retreat experience and its positive impact on your life. Please email your contribution to [sanghastories@dharm.org](mailto:sanghastories@dharm.org).

IMS teacher [Mark Coleman](#) shared one of his own poems during the Metta Retreat he helped teach at the Retreat Center last month.

### **Not Running From Here**

Your only duty  
Is to not run from here  
Even if the hole  
Of loss burns deep  
In your belly  
And on waking  
You feel the dread  
Of walking into the day  
Stripped bare  
Feeling the wind  
Pierce those  
Empty places within

You can always pretend  
Try putting on a face  
Other than your own  
But that's a game  
That's never worked  
And only burns  
A deeper hole inside  
The pocket of longing  
And makes the shell  
You've chosen to live in  
Even more hollow

And when you touch

The emptiness inside  
You've spent a lifetime  
Running from  
With delicate hands of love  
The way the evening fog  
Envelops the solitary tree

Without flinching  
Pressing into and  
Loving every gnarled crevice  
Every twisted branch  
Even the forgotten needles  
Fallen to the ground

This is the first step  
That begins the slow  
Journey of completeness  
Keeps inviting you deeper  
Into the roots of yourself  
Claiming your place  
That has always been  
Waiting right here



### Serving at IMS

**Staff Position Available** - Would you like to join the Retreat Center's dynamic Facilities team? We are currently seeking a Retreat Center [Housekeeper](#). Our housekeepers are responsible for providing a clean, neat, and aesthetically pleasing environment, conducive to intensive meditation practice.

If you are interested in joining our staff and working in a friendly and caring environment, please act fast because we wish to fill this position as soon as possible. Visit our website for more information on [staff life](#) and to [apply](#) for this position. You may also contact Kelly Collett at [hr@dharm.org](mailto:hr@dharm.org).

**Volunteering Opportunities** - IMS is seeking [volunteers](#) to support this summer's [Teen Retreat](#) (June 30 - July 4) and [Family Retreat](#) (July 7-12). These particular positions provide much-needed support for our Kitchen and Housekeeping departments, and don't include working directly with the teens and children.



If you wish to apply and are accepted, you'll be offered daily group dharma meetings during the retreat(s) and optional individual interviews with our Resident Teacher. You don't have to be an experienced cook or housekeeper to apply, but some level of physical fitness is needed. Previous IMS retreat experience is also required. Please note that these unique retreats are not in silence.

To apply or for more information, contact Sarah Stroud at [volunteer@dharma.org](mailto:volunteer@dharma.org) or visit our [website](#).



### Wishing You Well

Over the past several months, an extraordinary outpouring of generosity has come IMS's way from our community - we have been deeply touched. We thank you for your practice and your many offerings of support, from making a gift to our 'Single Rooms for All' endeavor to helping maintain and care for our refuge. May your service benefit all!



You can find an [archive of Sangha News](#) and links to its audio interviews on our website.

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*IMS is a spiritual refuge for all who seek freedom of mind and heart. We offer meditation retreats rooted in the Theravada Buddhist teachings of ethics, concentration and wisdom. These practices help develop awareness and compassion in ourselves, giving rise to greater peace and happiness in the world.*

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