

Dear Friends and Family of the Great Retreat,

Forty of our dearest friends and relatives, teachers and students, have just entered a three-year, three-month and three-day retreat to find true happiness for themselves and others! An epic snowstorm rolled in on the day of their entrance, which felt like a perfect blessing! After a hot meal amongst friends we all accompanied them up to the retreat boundaries. A few goodbyes were said verbally, but most were said in the loving gazes and warm embraces, and in the way the moonlight shone off the snow. Something so radical, so beautiful, such a daring act of love! They were tucked into this extraordinary retreat with a thick quilt of snow. Today the land is white and still... purified. New.



Committing to the challenge of a three-year meditation retreat is an impossibly rare opportunity to explore the inner space of the mind, seek a cure for suffering, and find a repeatable path toward peace and happiness for all who seek it. The goal of the three-year retreat, then, is to reach meditative stillness, perceive the true nature of reality in a state of deep meditation, and then use this understanding (as described in detail by generations of spiritual teachers) to reach enlightenment: a state of perfect wisdom, perfect compassion and perfect love. No longer hindered by our own inner obstacles, we can finally serve our fellow beings in the highest way.



It was touch and go to get county approval for all the cabins before the retreat began, and many of them are still unfinished, in spite of the hard work for so long by so many. Maybe it's not so unexpected, because of the lamas strong aspiration to help all beings, but Lama Christine and Ian's cabin, as well as Geshe Michael's which he will stay in while visiting the retreat, were the last ones, still being built as the retreat boundaries were closed. But by some kind of miracle, every last cabin was approved by that last day!



This first month on the land has been one of working out all the kinks (frozen water pipes, learning how to use new solar and propane systems, working out the supply delivery systems, finishing construction, etc.) However, the deliveries up into the retreat valley have been smooth, a good omen considering the condition of the roads! But these things are all working themselves out beautifully, and we are continuing to offer classes on campus, such as guided meditation, yoga, dharma, debate and many other fun things!

In addition, you are always welcome to come out and help serve! Nicole Davis, who has been serving Diamond Mountain selflessly and consistently for many years, needs help building her own cabin before the Certificate of Occupancy deadline in March. Also, more caretakers are needed to relive our hard-working crew. If you are available please contact our volunteer coordinator Anne at a.pearson.la@gmail.com.

Resources:

For questions, feedback, or personal support contact Elisha at: retreat4peace@gmail.com.

For volunteering opportunities contact Anne at: a.pearson.la@gmail.com.

For more frequent updates and interactive dialogue on the retreat, visit either www.retreat4peace.org, or retreat4peace on Facebook. You can access it at:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/retreat4peaceorg/390067428695>.

Other related links:

<http://diamondmountain.org/>

<http://www.asianclassics.org/>

<http://www.acidharma.org/>

<http://www.diamondcutterinstitute.com/>

<http://www.yogastudiesinstitute.org/>

<http://www.willduncan.org/introduction-to-3-year-challenge.html>

With love,
Diamond Mountain 3-Year retreat caretakers.

