



## ALBANY KARMA THEGSUM CHÖLING

October 12, 2012

### Membership in Albany KTC

Dear Friends,

The three jewels of Buddhism are the Buddha, the Dharma (teachings of the Buddha), and the Sangha. Sangha is a Sanskrit word which means "community of practitioners". Those of us who have tried meditating or practicing on our own may well appreciate the external support provided by a like-minded community of people and a well-appointed gathering place that provides inspiration and support for practice. Inspiration comes from those sitting around us, as we meditate in a group and when we receive teachings from our eloquent resident lama, Lama Zopa, or visiting lamas. Inspiration also comes from each others' questions, answers, and examples. For me, some of the most fascinating teachings have come from the answers teachers have given to the questions of those sitting around me.

This interaction in the name of the Dharma is "priceless" but it does cost money to maintain. If you are a member of Albany Karma Thegsum Choling (KTC), thank you. Your support makes all this possible.

We want to continue to provide a haven for people to practice meditation and learn from each other, training our minds in clarity, wisdom and compassion. We want to continue offering meditation instruction to anyone, free of charge, and teachings by our resident lama. We want to offer teachings by visiting lamas and rinpoches at affordable rates, including a 'pay what you can afford' policy. Would you like to support these endeavors? If you are not currently a member of Albany KTC, please consider becoming a member at a Full or Associate level.

### **Membership Benefits:**

**Associate Members:** As an associate member with dues at \$20 per month for an individual, you have voting privileges on local center (Albany KTC) matters. In addition, you get a 10% discount on any items we have for sale at Albany KTC, borrowing privileges in KTC's library, free teachings given by fellow members or Lama Zopa and a discount on teachings by visiting lamas.

**Full Members:** Full membership is open to those who have taken refuge, and includes joining not only our local center but also our parent monastery, Karma Triyana

An affiliate Tibetan Buddhist meditation and study center under the guidance of Karma Triyana Dharmachakra, seat of the Gyalwang Karmapa in North America. Doane Stuart School, Rensselaer, NY  
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Dharmachakra (KTD) in Woodstock, NY. Dues are \$38 per month for individuals and \$54 per month for a family or a couple. (Of this, \$20 for individuals and \$30 for family or couple goes to support KTC, with the rest going to KTD). Full members have voting rights on both local and KTD matters, a 10% discount on local items for sale, library privileges, free teachings when given by fellow members or Lama Zopa, and a discount for teachings given by visiting lamas.

A full member becomes eligible for KTD benefits after paying full membership for a 6 month period and in addition being paid up for 3 months in advance. When that happens, the full member receives discounts on teachings and room and board at KTD Monastery and a 10% discount on items over \$10 purchased at the KTD Bookstore (Namse Bangdzo - see <http://www.namsebangdzo.com> or click on the Namse Bangdzo icon on KTD's home web page)

Note that during the time one is accumulating status with KTD, one can still get a 10% discount on items sold through KTC, and KTC can bring in anything from Namse Bangdzo and thus offer the local discount.

### **Membership Obligations:**

Albany KTC depends primarily on our membership dues to cover expenses such as rent (which has increased), liability insurance, photocopying, practice materials, shrine room objects, publicity, and lama visits. So we really count on receiving your dues by the first of the month or quarter. For full members, we pay our center dues to KTD on a quarterly schedule based on how many full members we have. So again, it is important to pay dues by the first of the month or quarter you are paying for. Please make checks payable to "Albany KTC", and leave in the donation box at the door, or send to Nelson Kent (treasurer), 173 Old Stage Road, East Berne, NY 12059.

In addition, we appreciate whenever members can help out such as with setting up, cleaning up, or volunteering with special events. Some ways members can help are: offering flowers, bringing in refreshments and supplies, driving lamas during lama visits, website work, transcribing tapes, photocopying, giving presentations, making labels and signs, taking a turn as an umdze (meditation leader), and making in-kind donations. We accrue merit by helping out because ultimately our efforts make the Dharma available to more people.

Thirdly, as members, we represent our center wherever we are. We try to put Buddhist principles into actual practice by being kind to each other, saying hello to newcomers, helping others when possible, and if we cannot, at least not harming them. Remember, our actions speak louder than words, so there is no need to proselytize.

We welcome your participation in our practices and programs, and hope you will consider becoming a member of Albany KTC.

Sincerely,

Joan Atkins  
For the KTC Executive Committee