

## Becoming More Involved in the Eno River Buddhist Community

The Eno River Buddhist Community (ERBC) depends upon the energy, effort and good will of its members to carry out its activities and to further its mission. Expressed in terms of the Buddhist notion of dependent co-arising, our community emerges dependent upon the many co-occurring contributions of its members. The Guiding Committee wishes to offer three reflections on this co-constructed nature of our community.

The first is to say *thank you*. A deep bow of gratitude to all who participate in this unfolding process, through serving in leadership roles, through less visible but no less essential contributions of energy and involvement, through your financial support, and through the simple and noble fact of your presence and your practice. What ERBC offers to its participants and the larger community is a result of these many generous acts by each and every one of us.

Second, deepening your involvement enlivens and enriches our community, so we encourage you to enhance your active participation.

- In particular, we invite you to consider serving the community in leadership roles, which include Practice Leaders, the Program Committee, and the Guiding Committee. Practice Leaders support our study and practice of the Buddha's teachings in various ways, including bell-ringing, offering readings, introducing recorded Dhamma talks, leading chants, facilitating recitation of the precepts, guiding *mettā* meditation, presenting programs, and providing meditation instruction for newcomers. (An individual need not be comfortable leading all of these forms of study and practice in order to serve as a Practice Leader.) The Program Committee plans and oversees group practice and programming, while the Guiding Committee has ultimate responsibility for stewardship of our community and for setting the community's course. The document, *Leadership Groups in the Eno River Buddhist Community* further describes these opportunities to serve.
- There also are diverse avenues for deepening your involvement without committing to a formal leadership role. You may wish to support our group meditation by arriving early to help in setting up a tranquil environment for practice. Or you may choose to assist with planning and coordinating our retreat offerings. Perhaps you have an interest in exploring the Buddha's teachings in a sutta study group. Or you may feel drawn toward social engagement, helping to shape the relationship between our group and the wider world. Perhaps you are drawn toward community gatherings such as practice sharing, potlucks, book clubs or film screenings. Maybe you possess creative or technical skills that would enhance our website. The benefits to our community from greater involvement by its participants are as varied as we ourselves.

Finally, and crucially, becoming more involved supports the path of practice. The community we co-create is a spiritual practice community, and our contributive actions on its behalf present us with valuable opportunities for spiritual growth. As we extend our care and attention toward

the community—its activities, its mission and each other—we cultivate qualities and capacities such as generosity, mindfulness, compassion and good will. Service to the community also brings us into greater contact with other practitioners, which can help stabilize and mature our personal practice. It can also provide motivation and opportunities to deepen our understanding of the Buddha's teachings. Those with experience serving in leadership roles can attest to the many ways that intensified involvement has deepened their practice and enriched their encounter with the Dhamma.

We are grateful to you for sharing in this community's co-creation, and we invite you to further your involvement and your practice. Our aspiration is to offer a range of opportunities for more active participation, aiming toward mutual benefit for both individual practitioners and for the community as a whole. If you would like more information, or would like to further develop your contribution to ERBC, please speak with a current leader.