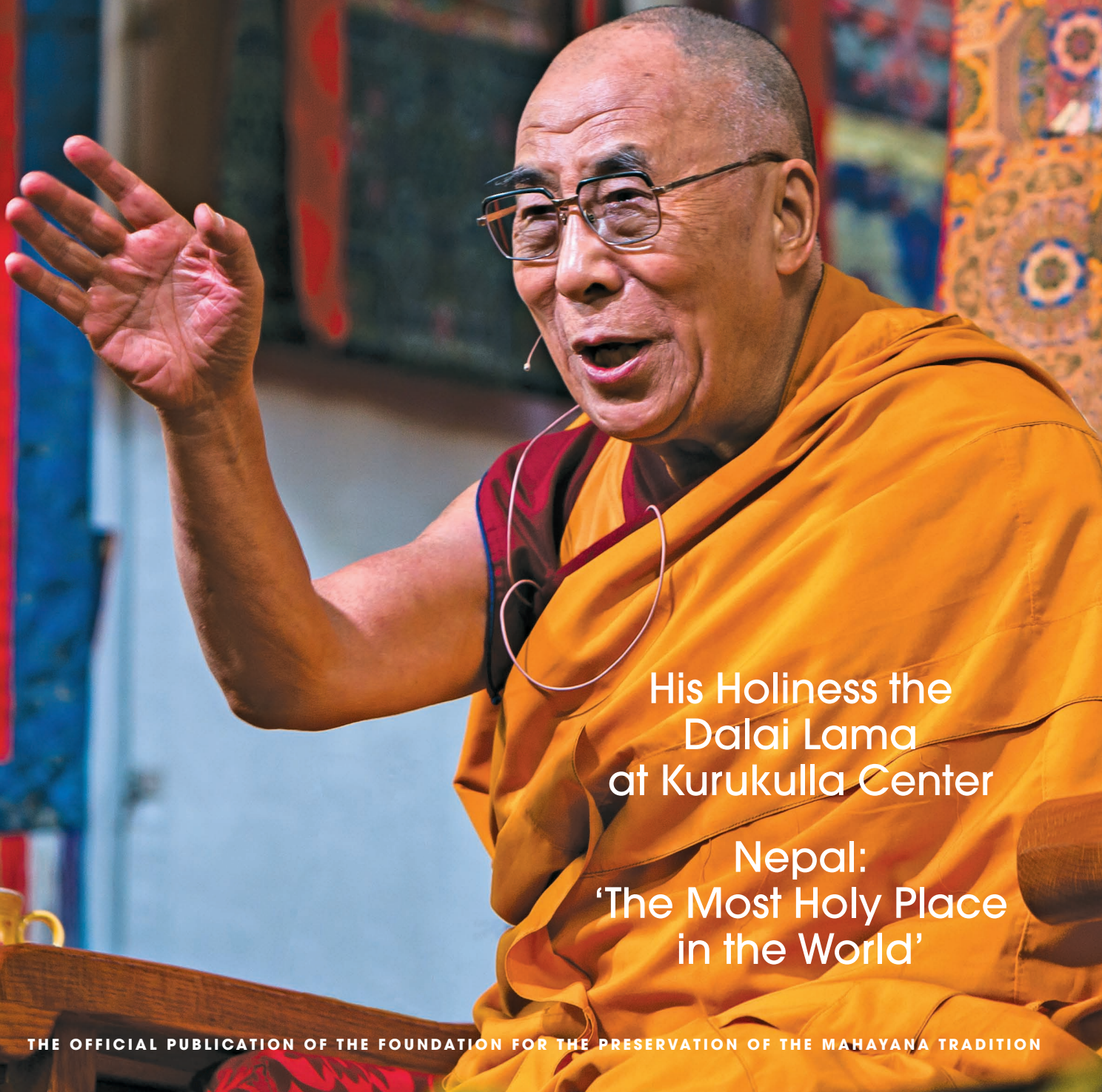




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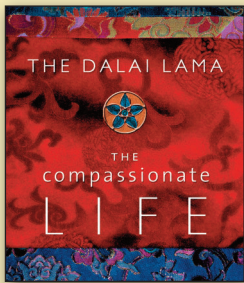
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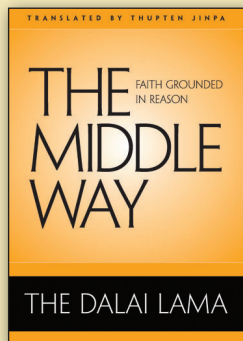
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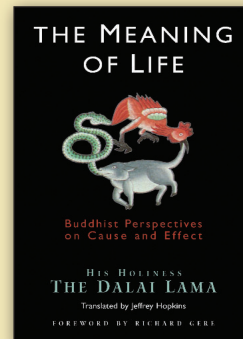
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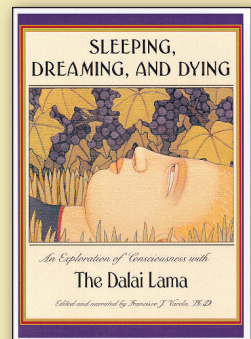
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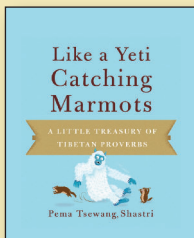
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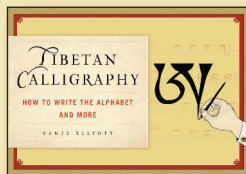
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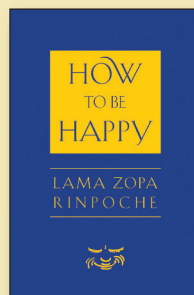
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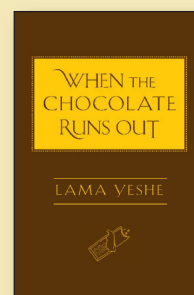
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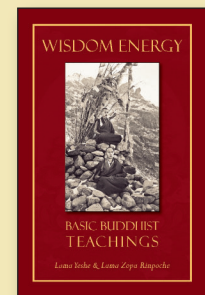
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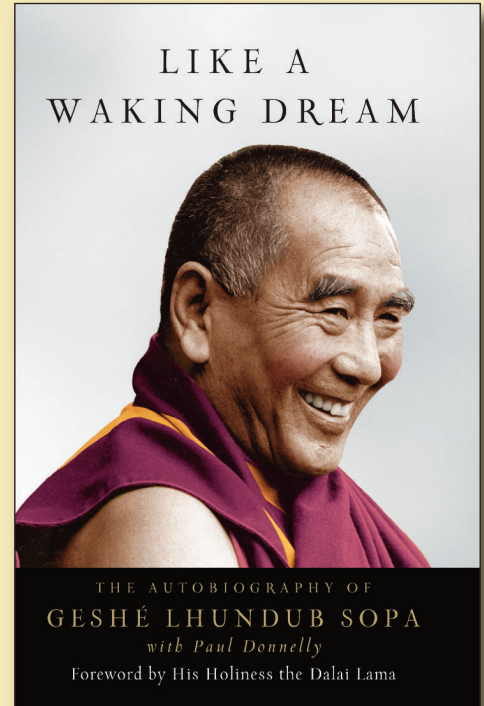
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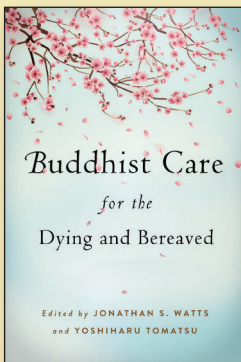
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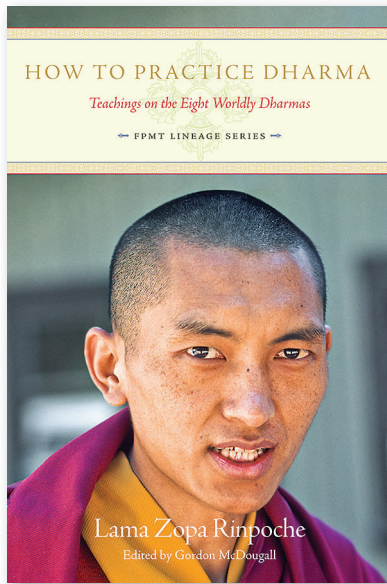
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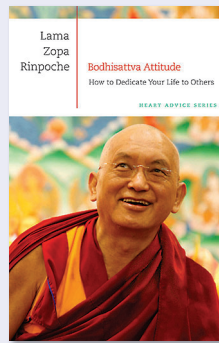
“Buddhism is a house full of treasures—practices for gaining the happiness of future lives, the bliss of liberation and the supreme happiness of enlightenment— but knowing the difference between Dharma and non-Dharma is the key that opens the door to all those treasures. No matter how much we know about emptiness, the chakras or controlling our vital energy through kundalini yoga, it’s all pointless without this crucial understanding of how to practice Dharma, how to correct our actions. There are vast numbers of people who delude themselves and waste their entire life studying the most esoteric aspects of Buddhism but never understand the most fundamental point, the distinction between Dharma and non-Dharma.” — *Lama Zopa Rinpoche*



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CONTENTS

- 6 FROM THE EDITOR
- 8 TEACHINGS AND ADVICE
- FEATURE STORY
- 12 Nepal: 'The Most Holy Place in the World'
- 24 DHARMA AND THE MODERN WORLD
- 36 TAKING CARE
- 40 EDUCATION
- 48 YOUR COMMUNITY
- 50 OBITUARIES
- 52 FPMT NEWS AROUND THE WORLD
- 59 FPMT DIRECTORY



37

ONLINE HIGHLIGHTS

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The January-March 2013 issue includes ...

ADVICE FROM A VIRTUOUS FRIEND

"Seeing Problems as Positive"

By Lama Zopa Rinpoche

TAKING CARE

"A New Generation of Ladakhi Nuns"

By Mary Wellhoner and Marlies Bosch

PHOTO GALLERIES

FPMT in Nepal & H.H. the Dalai Lama at Kurukulla Center

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COVER: His Holiness the Dalai Lama at Kurukulla Center, Medford, Massachusetts, U.S., October 2012. Photo by Kadri Kurgun.



24



30



43



56

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Dear Reader,

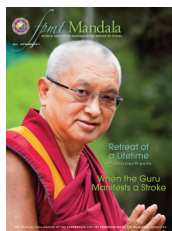
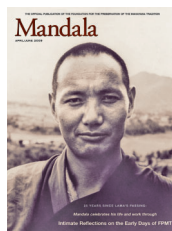
In this issue, we're highlighting FPMT's activities in Nepal. The scope and depth of the work being done by Sangha and lay students there is amazing. In addition to Kopan Monastery and Khachoe Ghakyil Nunnery, FPMT has two active urban centers providing Dharma and meditation instruction to Westerners and local Nepalis – Himalayan Buddhist Meditation Centre in Kathmandu and Ganden Yiga Chözin Buddhist Meditation Centre in Pokhara – as well as Lawudo Retreat Centre in Solu Khumbu. Kopan Monastery also oversees several projects supporting Dharma in remote areas in Solu Khumbu and Tsum. The Lama Zopa Rinpoche Bodhichitta Fund provides assistance to other endeavors to promote and preserve Dharma within impoverished Buddhist communities in Nepal. Combined with this work are activities aimed at ensuring that people's basic needs are met, including clean water, adequate shelter, medical assistance, basic education, access to electricity and conservation of

natural resources. What we've been able to include in this issue of *Mandala* about these activities is only the tip of the iceberg.

Perhaps most inspiring for me is thinking about all the educational opportunities that Lama Yeshe, Lama Zopa Rinpoche and Khensur Rinpoche Lama Lhundrup among others have created in Nepal for so many – boys and girls, women and men – wishing to study Buddhist philosophy. We are already seeing the first generation of Kopan monks and nuns showing themselves as skilled teachers and interpreters and stepping into leadership roles with the organization. With FPMT's continued commitment to supporting Dharma study and practice in Nepal, we will continue to be blessed with highly trained and skillful teachers emerging from these institutions and projects.

Love,
Laura

About Mandala



Mandala is the official publication of the Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition (FPMT), an international charitable organization founded more than thirty years ago by two Tibetan Buddhist masters: Lama Thubten Yeshe (1935-1984) and Lama Thubten

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Mandala is published in January, April, July and October.

Zopa Rinpoche. FPMT is now a vibrant international community with a network of over 150 affiliate centers, projects, services and study groups in more than thirty countries.

Editorial Policy

Recurring topics include: Buddhist philosophy; Education; Ordination and the Sangha; Buddhism and Modern Life; Youth Issues; FPMT Activities Worldwide; Lama Yeshe and his teachings; Lama Zopa Rinpoche and his teachings; His Holiness the Dalai Lama and his teachings, among many other topics.

Writers, photographers and artists, both amateur and professional, are encouraged to submit material for consideration. *Mandala* currently does not pay for publishable content; we credit all photos and other work as requested.

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Managing Editor and Publisher

Laura Miller
laura@fpmt.org

Assistant Editor, Advertising & Sales

Michael Jolliffe
michael@fpmt.org

Art Director

Cowgirls Design
cowgirl@newmex.com

Friends of FPMT Program

Trevor Fenwick
friends@fpmt.org

FPMT, Inc.

1632 SE 11th Ave.
Portland, OR 97214-4702
Tel: 1 503 808 1588
Fax: 1 503 232 0557
Toll free USA only
1 866 241 9886

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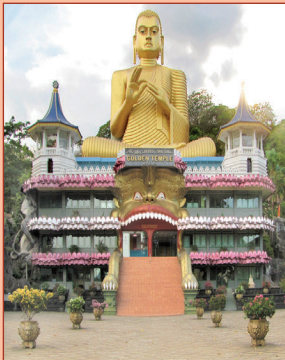
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We are delighted to announce the return of **Ven. Robina Courtin** who has led many successful pilgrimages since our very first one in 2001. Now she will be leading our first ever pilgrimages to Sri Lanka and Burma!



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2013 Myanmar (Burma) Pilgrimage

September 1 to 21, 2013 — from Yangon, Myanmar

- Visit sacred Buddhist sites in **Burma**: Golden Rock, Bagan, Mount Popa, Mandalay, Ava, Amarapura and Yangon
 - Travel in a comfortable bus.
- Daily practices and teachings with a retreat in Bagan.
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Lama Zopa Rinpoche has told us that it is important to do authentic practices on pilgrimage in order for it to be meaningful and productive.

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Lama Yeshe's Wisdom

Spiritual Art Gives You Wisdom Vibrations

By Lama Yeshe

Portraits of Lama Yeshe taken by Carol Royce-Wilder, Yucca Valley, California, 1977. Photos courtesy of Lama Yeshe Wisdom Archive.

The material objects you see on the altar and hanging on the walls of this meditation hall, these statues and thangkas, are symbolic. What do they symbolize? Wisdom, or understanding. Tibetan Buddhist psychology would say that these physical objects are talking to you beyond words.

Take my dorje and bell, for example. The person who created them had pure motivation, so they have a certain energy, what we might call “good vibrations.” This energy too communicates with us beyond words.

Similarly with pictorial representations of buddhas, bodhisattvas, realized lamas, yogis and yoginis. Yoginis are sometimes shown as dancing – if you want to dance, realized dancing is OK! Anyway, such art also automatically transmits informational energy to your mind. Spiritual art gives you wisdom vibrations rather than the emotionally ignorant energy that ordinary art conveys.

When we place light, incense, flowers and so forth on the altar we're not making offerings to the material objects there, we're making offerings to the Buddha's mind, his wisdom consciousness.

You can see this even here. I think Westerners find this kind of thing easy to experience. For example, at this seminar you're all sitting in the meditation posture for long periods of time whereas at home, you might find it difficult to sit like this for even five minutes. You're surprising yourself: “In my life, I never thought I'd be able to sit this way!” Don't you think that people new to this tradition might think like that? “I can't believe I'm sitting cross-legged in this way. I never dreamed I'd be able to do that. But here I am at this meditation course doing it.”

This is partly because of the influence of the Buddha statue on the altar and the thangkas on the walls. You

think, “He's a human being; I'm a human being. He's sitting like that; I can sit like that.”

Then there's the female buddha, Tara. She's an enlightened being with perfect power and perfect knowledge-wisdom in female aspect, in a female body. She's completely controlled; a female who has attained realizations equal to any male. So when women see her they think, “Wow, if she can become buddha, so can I.”

Look, I can't generalize, but I've heard many women say, “I can't control my body; my energy's too strong.” We always devalue ourselves like that. It's a weak mind that does so and many women feel their mind is weak. They feel that they need somebody else to depend upon. Without grasping at another person they feel lonely and lost. This is symptomatic of the weak mind. As long as you're on this earth, there's no way to be lonely. You're surrounded by all living beings. But when people – both

men and women – are depressed, they do feel lonely because the lonely mind is unrealistic and emotional. So archetypal images of perfection are part of Lord Buddha's psychology and really are very helpful.

Tourists come to the East and see Buddha statues and so forth in the temples and think that we believe that these material objects are God: “Buddhists worship graven images.” You can even read this in books. Isn't that silly? We don't believe that those material images are Buddha. They're symbolic.

So you have to know this, otherwise you'll get yourself into trouble. Mahayana art is not Buddha, Dharma or Sangha. When we place light, incense, flowers and so

forth on the altar we're not making offerings to the material objects there, we're making offerings to the Buddha's mind, his wisdom consciousness.

So it's very good that you keep images of enlightened beings in your room. Just looking at them can give you control and everlasting peace. They give you positive imprints in your mind; they impart knowledge; they give you teachings. They're like a full-time meditation course. So it's very helpful for you to have holy objects in your room rather than ridiculous samsaric pictures polluting your mind.

Actually, when you go to your friends' houses you can see what their interests are by the art on their walls and the way they decorate their rooms because what they do is a projection of their minds. You can see what trip they're currently on, no matter what they say. People can talk all they want but what they actually do speaks louder than any words.

The way people put their lives together demonstrates whether they're living with delusion or wisdom because it's symbolic of their state of mind. You can see what's going on in their mind because its vibration manifests externally.

Lama Yeshe gave this teaching at a weekend seminar in Christchurch, New Zealand, June 14, 1975. Edited from the Lama Yeshe Wisdom Archive by Nicholas Ribush.

A Teacher Tells Us Why



Question:
There are so many people out there struggling, how can I best help them?

Answered by Thubten Gyatso

The more we learn about the teachings, the more we recognize the extent of misery in the world. Other-inflicted misery is very obvious to all, whereas self-inflicted misery due to disturbing emotions and karma is not so recognizable until our understanding deepens. Just as we have seen His Holiness the Dalai Lama cry when he talks or hears about the situation in Tibet, tears come more readily to the eyes of those who know something about Dharma. The evening news or even a tragedy on the screen can evoke strong sympathy as we realize the horror of our self-created torture chambers.

In the long term, we can best help others by actualizing our innate potential to become a buddha in our own right.

Therefore, whenever we see, hear of, or think about suffering in the world, we should reaffirm our determination to attain enlightenment as soon as possible. That's the first positive response. Then we should set about doing what we can to help here and now.

To be able to quickly respond to the needs of others, instead of our usual attitude of seeking that which will most please our friends and ourselves, we should think, "How can my life be most beneficial for others?" There are many different careers we can pursue in the field of caring for others. Best of all, if our life situation is appropriate, we can take ordination to fully immerse ourselves in Dharma practice and become a source of inspiration for others to take refuge in or, at least, to become less selfish and more open to the needs of others.

A doctor friend of mine carries an elaborate box of emergency medical equipment in his car so that, if he comes across a road accident, he can immediately help. We cannot all do that but, in our minds, we can maintain and continually refresh our own emergency equipment of love, compassion, wisdom and patience so that we can help those in need. And such emergencies are far, far more common than road accidents.

If we are in a position of political influence or of wealth, with wisdom and compassion we can use these assets for the greater benefit of society. For those lacking conducive conditions for study and meditation, working to achieve power and wealth in order to benefit others becomes an exceptionally strong Dharma practice.

Dharma centers are sources of succour, relief and hope for the world. By recognizing that they represent the Three Jewels, we should not be put off by "Dharma politics" in centers. Conflict is an inevitable manifestation of immature egos, and we should do all we can to create harmony and a sense of joy and responsibility in our Dharma center. With the right attitude, cleaning the toilets and gardening at the Dharma center are as important and as beneficial as preparing the meditation room and looking after the offerings. We should always foster friendship and heal disharmony by never gossiping about the shortcomings of others and always extolling their good qualities.

In brief, if we really want to help the struggling masses, we should make the strong decision to lead by example. With mindfulness focused upon virtue, and alertness guarding against our own shortcomings, we should immerse ourselves in the most difficult situations and be pillars of strength, love, patience and wisdom. As the Boy and Girl Scouts say: physically, verbally and mentally, to the best of our capacity, we should *be prepared* at all times to help those in need.

Thubten Gyatso (Dr. Adrian Feldmann) is an Australian senior student and author, ordained over 35 years ago by Lama Yeshe. He currently lives at Thubten Shedrup Ling Monastery in Eaglehawk, Victoria, Australia.

TEACHINGS AND ADVICE

Practicing Dharma in Daily Life



From top: Lama Zopa Rinpoche reciting a sutra at Land of Calm Abiding, California, 2002

Yangsi Rinpoche. Photo by John Berthold.



Sutra Practice

As part of the launch of a new sutra-specific webpage (see page 40), FPMT Education Services spoke with Yangsi Rinpoche, Maitripa College founder and president, about incorporating sutras into one's daily practice. He had the following to say:

“The purpose of practice is merit accumulation and purification, and if we read just a portion of a sutra, it is effective for both of these. You don't need to read all the sutra at once. I've been doing a translation of a text with my class at Maitripa College, and it says that if you read even only one *shloka*, one verse, of a text about emptiness, there is even more merit in that than doing millions of offerings.

“One student, Katrina Brooks, has a very good translation. It comes from *The Manner of Perfecting the Analysis of the View: A Presentation of Memory Aides Extracted from Relevant Texts* by Ngawang Tsering:

Moreover, by memorizing just one verse on the teachings on emptiness and teaching it to others, one gains greater merit than by offering to the Buddha world systems as numerous as the number of grains of sand in the river Ganges, all filled with the seven precious substances.

“The main point [of sutra practice] is the accumulation of merit, because without merit, life doesn't function very well,” Yangsi Rinpoche said.

Sutras commonly recited by FPMT students include *Sutra of Golden Light*, *Sanghata Sutra*, *Vajra Cutter Sutra* and *Heart Sutra*. These sutras and several others can be found on FPMT Education Services' online sutra page.

There is no limit to the benefits of sutra practice. In a correspondence with a student, Lama Zopa Rinpoche wrote, “Reading the sutras will help you so much. It is the easiest way to direct your life toward enlightenment and toward enlightening all sentient beings, so it has so much benefit, even benefit for your nose.” (From Lama Yeshe Wisdom Archive's “Lama Zopa Rinpoche's Online Advice Book”) ♦

You can find FPMT Education Services' collection of sutras and advice at www.fpmt.org/education/teachings/sutras. Visit Lama Yeshe Wisdom Archive at www.lamayeshe.com.

Visit mandalamagazine.org for more **Teachings and Advice**, including Lama Zopa Rinpoche on working with the eight worldly dharmas.

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Days of Miracles

Full and New Moons

(Tibetan 15th and 30th days)
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March 11, 27

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*Geshe Lama Konchog Stupa at Kopan Monastery, Nepal,
June 2011. Photo by Ven. Roger Kunsang.*

Nepal:

'The Most Holy Place in the World'

“[Nepal] is really the most holy place in the world,” Lama Zopa Rinpoche said at a 2007 talk in Kathmandu on the “Value of Meditation and Pilgrimage for Nepal.” “Guru Shakyamuni Buddha took birth in Nepal, and not only that, so many great yogis who achieved enlightenment were born in Nepal. They practiced and achieved the complete path to enlightenment, the path that Buddha has taught. ... So Nepal is unbelievable, such a precious holy place.”

Without a doubt, the country of Nepal has been integral to the development and flourishing of FPMT. Lama Zopa Rinpoche, FPMT’s spiritual director, was born in Thami in the Solu Khumbu district of Nepal, known for being the home of Mount Everest. In 1969, FPMT founders Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa Rinpoche came to live on Kopan Hill near Nepal’s Boudhanath Stupa. Within a few years, the Lamas had founded a monastery there and had begun to educate young boys from Nepal’s Buddhist areas. At the same time, Kopan’s November Course was drawing hundreds of Westerners onto the Buddhist path, inspiring invitations to teach around the globe for the Lamas and motivating students to open Dharma centers in their home countries.

Today, FPMT centers, projects and services number around 160 in 37 countries, but Nepal remains a source of profound inspiration and instruction for the organization as well as a place of vibrant Dharma practice. In this issue of *Mandala*, we’ll take a look at the centers and projects in Nepal connected to FPMT. Please be sure to visit mandalamagazine.org for more photos, stories and interviews from Nepal.

Kopan Monastery

Central to all of FPMT's activities in Nepal is Kopan Monastery, located on the outskirts of Kathmandu. Today, Kopan Monastery is home to around 350 monks and the nearby Khachoe Ghakyil Nunnery has about 360 nuns. These two institutions provide monks and nuns with both a traditional Buddhist monastic education, including philosophy and ritual arts, and instruction in modern topics, including English, Nepali and mathematics. Kopan has a fully fledged geshe program (the Geshe degree is an equivalent to a Ph.D. in Buddhist Studies), enabling monks to complete most of their philosophical studies at Kopan before moving on to the monastic universities in South India for the completion of their studies and higher degrees. Khachoe Ghakyil also offers a geshe program for its nuns.

"Kopan Monastery and Nunnery form one of the biggest monastic complexes in Nepal and both of them are very highly respected for their education programs," Geshe Sherab, who was both an early student at Kopan and later served as Kopan's headmaster, told *Mandala*. "There is great respect from the Buddhist community in general. Kopan has taken a leadership role in bringing the Gelug monasteries together to have a Gelug Mönlam festival every year. Kopan also plays an instrumental role in the Jang Gunchö, the annual debate among all the Gelug monasteries."

Beginning at age 7, boys and girls can join the monastery and nunnery. The students' education, room and board are offered to them for free. They come from Himalayan regions in Nepal such as Tsum, Mustang, Menang and Solu Khumbu, as well as from some Himalayan regions in India such as Ladakh and Himachal Pradesh. Many come from Tibet as well.

In 2011, Kopan lost its abbot Khensur Rinpoche Lama Lhundrup Rigsel to cancer [see *Mandala* January-March 2011]. Lama Lhundrup offered his service to Kopan for 40 years and was instrumental in developing the geshe program for both monks and nuns. A stupa is being constructed at Kopan for his quick return. Kopan's new abbot, Khen Rinpoche Geshe Chonyi, first came to Kopan as a boy in 1974. He was the first Kopan monk to become a lharampa geshe, completing his studies at Sera Je Monastic University and Gyume Tantric College. Khen Rinpoche also continues to serve as resident geshe at Amitabha Buddhist Centre in Singapore. By offering geshe programs at the monastery and nunnery, Kopan is helping to create the next generation of Buddhist teachers, many who will come to teach at FPMT centers around the world.



Kopan monks in front of gampa, May 2012. Photo by Ven. Roger Kunsang.

"When Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa Rinpoche started the monastery, they wanted to make Kopan an institution not only for the local Himalayan people but also support the Buddhist education of Westerners as well," Geshe Sherab explained. "From the very beginning, it was planned and established that way." More than 1,000 foreigners come every year to the various courses and teachings offered at Kopan, not counting the visitors who come for short stays and attend the daily Dharma talks.

"Kopan also assists monasteries in remote areas. This includes helping the local people with pujas and other things. So the monastery and nunnery definitely are helping to revive and to make flourish the Dharma in those places where the Dharma has declined to some extent," Geshe Sherab said. "In addition, Kopan has the medical clinic which helps a lot of local people around the Kopan area."

Over the past 40 years, Kopan has contributed to its local economy as well through building projects and other aspects of maintaining a thriving Buddhist community. The Kopan manager also offers assistance to FPMT centers around the world with procuring holy objects. As the monastery has developed relationships with many skilled and reputable artisans, centers are able to order and receive large statues and prayer wheels, stupas and other holy objects under the Kopan manager's supervision. Kopan Monastery also provides the FPMT Foundation Store with ritual items and meditation supplies and advises on vendors for thangkas and smaller statues, assuring the best quality of items.

Kopan Monastery supports itself through the courses and teaching programs it offers international visitors as well as through a sponsorship program.

You can learn more about the monastery, the courses it offers and how to support its work at www.kopanmonastery.com.



Khen Rinpoche Geshe Chonyi, Geshe Sherab and Geshe Nyendrak on top of the dining room building at Kopan Monastery, Nepal, July 2011. Photo by Ven. Roger Kunsang.

Khachoe Ghakyil Nunnery

Located just down the hill from Kopan Monastery, is its sister nunnery, Khachoe Ghakyil, also born from Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa Rinpoche's inspiration and kindness. In 1979, the Lamas invited two young women who had just escaped from Tibet to join their monastery in Kathmandu. Over the years, more young women came to Kopan as nuns. In 1990, land was acquired for a nunnery. A gumpa and living quarters were built. In 1994, the nunnery was given the auspicious name of Khachoe Ghakyil Ling – Pure Land of Bliss.

Khachoe Ghakyil offers women an opportunity to not only follow their spiritual calling, but to receive a traditional Tibetan



New gumpa, Khachoe Ghakyil Nunnery, Nepal, 2011

Buddhist monastic education. When the first young women arrived at Kopan, nuns were expected to primarily perform pujas and prayers and recite mantras. But Lama Yeshe had a different vision. He wanted these intelligent women to have a deeper understanding of Dharma and to follow the same study program as the monks.

What makes Khachoe Ghakyil exceptional is that it is one of a few nunneries in India and Nepal offering a geshe program, due to the support of Lama Zopa Rinpoche and the past efforts of Khensur Rinpoche Lama Lhundrup. The curriculum is based on the same 16-year course of philosophical study as the monks, which includes participation in the annual inter-monastic debates, hosted by the various nunneries in India and Nepal that offer also geshe programs. In May 2012, the Tibetan Department of Religion and Culture announced the historic news that nuns will now be able to take the final geshe exams, allowing them to complete their degrees. The first group of Khachoe Ghakyil nuns is expected to be awarded their degrees in 2014.

More than half of the nuns at Khachoe Ghakyil are in the study program. Those not in the program offer their service to the

community through work as administrators, managers and teachers. Others work in the incense factory, which helps raise funds for the nunnery. The nunnery supports itself additionally through performing prayers for the local and international community and through a sponsorship program.

An extensive project to expand the facilities at the nunnery is entering its final stages. When completed in 2014, the additions will include an accommodation block of 100 rooms, a kitchen and dining building, a new beautifully decorated gumpa and a debating courtyard with a large memorial stupa for Khensur Rinpoche Lama Lhundrup in the center.

To learn more about Khachoe Ghakyil Nunnery and how to offer support to the nuns, please visit www.kopannunnery.org.

Becoming Geshe-mas

Ven. Jangchub Gyalmo is from Tumeli in Tsum, Nepal. She came to Kopan Nunnery in 1992 when she was 18 years old. Ven. Namdrol Phuntsok left her home in Pembo, Tibet, near Lhasa for Nepal in 1992. She arrived at Kopan in 1993 when she was 13. Both Vens. Gyalmo and Phuntsok are in the geshe program at Khachoe Ghakyil Nunnery. Arya Cayton, spiritual program coordinator at Himalayan Buddhist Meditation Centre in Kathmandu, talked with them in October 2012 about their experiences at the nunnery. Ven. Tenzin Tsomo (Chandra Chiara Ehm) helped with interpretation.

Arya: What was Kopan Nunnery like when you first came and how has it changed?

Ven. Gyalmo: When I joined the nunnery in 1992, there were about 30 nuns, and we had a common sleeping room and a common puja hall, which were the same room, and we studied together with the senior nuns. Khensur Rinpoche [Lama Lhundrup], Geshe Khechok and Geshe Lama Konchog were



From left: Khachoe Ghakyil nuns Vens. Jangchub Gyalmo and Namdrol Phuntsok, Boudhanath, Nepal, October 2012. Photo by Arya Cayton.

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teaching periodically and we were enjoying these teachings, but there were no structured studies.

Khensur Rinpoche was like our father. ... After one year, we settled down the hill at the new nunnery. It was a big day. Khensur Rinpoche at the time said, "This will be like every other year; I will take care of you. I will come down; nothing will change in terms of our relationship."

Over the years, the infrastructure has developed quickly and well. Now there is a study program with regular studies taking place. There is room for everyone and our diet is much more balanced.

Ven. Phuntsok: I came to Kopan a little later than Ani Gyalmo. At that time, the nunnery's new main puja hall had already been built, but not the kitchen and accommodation rooms. We had to work so much! We'd clean the grounds, moving sand and stones. We had to get water from far away as we didn't have water inside. We had to have our food and tea at Kopan Monastery. But we felt happy, very peaceful.

We had class with Khensur Rinpoche. We didn't have any chance to study English, but we had a very good opportunity to study Buddhistharma. Now we have many very good teachers – Nepali teachers, English teachers, Tibetan teachers. Of course, for philosophy, there is a very good and very famous teacher in the nunnery.

Arya: You'll both be completing geshe studies with the geshe exam soon, which will make you among the first Tibetan and Nepali nuns in history to receive this degree and become geshe-mas. What have been the biggest challenges in getting to this point?

Ven. Gyalmo: Since we are the first nuns to be getting this degree, there was nobody for us to look up to. Because there were no geshe-ma role models, it has been difficult to get our motivation straight and steady and persevere.

Ven. Phuntsok: We also didn't have any encouragement to become geshe-mas. Monks inside institutions like Sera and Drepung obviously study very strongly, because after some years they *will* take the exam for the Geshe degree. We studied, but didn't feel that we would get that same opportunity. Maybe we can say that this was one obstacle we faced.

There was quite a lot of talk in India and Nepal about giving the Geshe-ma degree, but for a long time it was just words. In 2012, however, the Sikyong of Tibet, Lobsang Sangay, expressed his strong support for the idea. So that was important. Also we had support from high lamas such as the Ganden Tripa and the Jangtse Chöje – two very great lamas – and His Holiness the Dalai Lama as well. Now we feel very encouraged to take the exam.

You can read the complete interview with Vens. Gyalmo and Phuntsok as part of *Mandala's* exclusive online content at mandalamagazine.org.

Projects of Kopan Monastery

Kopan Monastery manages several charitable projects on behalf of the FPMT and Lama Zopa Rinpoche. All of these projects were initiated with the express purpose of serving living beings according to their spiritual and practical needs.

Of special concern are the remote monastic communities peppered throughout the Himalayas, which are vital in keeping the precious teachings of Shakyamuni Buddha alive and vibrant. His Holiness the Dalai Lama has repeatedly stressed how important it is to support these institutions as a means to secure the survival of the Tibetan Buddhist tradition for future generations.

Thubten Shedrup Ling Monastery



Thubten Shedrup Ling monks

Nestled in the mountains of lower Solu Khumbu, Thubten Shedrup Ling, a branch of Kopan Monastery, is close to the trekking trail to the Everest base camp, but is quite isolated. With few jobs available, most people living in the area survive as porters during the trekking season, traders or subsistence farmers.

Thubten Shedrup Ling was initially founded to provide a spiritual center for the refugees leaving Tibet after 1959. In the late 1990s, the Tibetan government in exile requested Kopan Monastery to take over the care and management of the monastery and its resident monks.

The monastery provides an opportunity for the young boys from Buddhist families to receive an education, keep vows in a monastic environment, and study and practice the teachings of the Buddha. Geshe Yonten, a senior monk from Kopan and the

LIVING IN THE VOWS

Practicing together with FPMT sangha in France

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- Nalanda's study programs are under the guidance of two resident Lharampa Geshes and frequently visiting Masters.
- Nalanda offers an in-depth seven year residential FPMT Masters Program (beginning in 2013).
- Nalanda offers an in-depth five year residential FPMT Basic Program (beginning in 2013).



SERVICE

- Nalanda offers the opportunity to have prayers and pujas performed for people having health and other obstacles, or for people who have passed away.
- Nalanda offers the opportunity to serve the monastery as a resident volunteer, and fulfil the wishes of Lama Zopa Rinpoche.



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abbot of the monastery, now takes care of 36 monks ranging in age from 3 to 23. The young monks both receive basic Buddhist training and general education. Older monks study philosophy with a qualified geshe. Several have already gone on to Sera Monastery in South India to continue their studies.

The monastery has been recently renovated and a large prayer wheel has been added. With new monks joining the monastery regularly, there is a need for more rooms, a proper dining hall and office facilities.

In addition to taking care of the monks, Abbot Geshe Yonten aims to revive the spiritual heritage of the Sherpas and Tibetans that comprise the local community. The monastery arranges prayers and pujas for the lay community, and gives advice and blessings during important life events, such as naming ceremonies for children, marriages and funeral rites.

Thubten Shedrup Ling is currently building a hostel to accommodate children attending a close-by Buddhist school, a much more affordable and safer option for local Buddhist families than sending children to Kathmandu. The monastery also hosts a small medical clinic and regular health camps are organized.

Yulo Koepa Nunnery – Pure Land of Tara

In 2012, Khachoe Ghakyil Nunnery was offered Tara Temple, a project of the Universal Education School near Varanasi, India, founded by student Valentino Giacomo. The property and buildings were renamed by Lama Zopa Rinpoche to Yulo Koepa Nunnery. Currently, 15 nuns from Khachoe Ghakyil live and study there, taking turns to support a twenty-four-hours-a-day recitation of the *Praises to the 21 Taras* and daily Tara pujas. Every two years a new group of nuns takes over this rigorous schedule.

A new kitchen recently was built to allow for more hygienic food preparation, and a generator has been installed to make the electric supply more reliable. As soon as more funds become available, an accommodation block will be built to ease crowding.

Tsum Monastic Communities

Rachen Nunnery and Mu Gumpa are found along the river raging down the steep Tsum Valley, high in the Himalayas. Tsum is a very old Buddhist region, close to Tibet, with a long history of Dharma practice and is considered a highly conducive place for practice.

Rachen Nunnery was established in 1936 by Drupa Rinpoche, a Bhutanese lama who meditated in the caves dotted along the rim of the valley. The present Drupa Rinpoche requested Lama Zopa Rinpoche to take care of the two Sangha



Rachen nuns helping to build their new gumpa

communities there. Due to generous sponsors, Kopan has been able to help improve the living conditions at the nunnery, including piped-in water, solar lights, electricity, a vegetable garden and construction of a kitchen, dining room, classrooms, accommodations and a gumpa. A resident Tibetan doctor is available to address health problems.

Mu Gumpa sits on top of a foothill, overlooked by high, white-capped peaks. Twenty monks live in the isolated monastery under the guidance of a spiritual teacher. The young monks receive instruction in Buddhist scriptures, Tibetan and English, and general education. Some of the older monks have lived at Mu for 40 years and spend their time in meditation.

Tsum winters are long and very hard and most of the young nuns and monks go to Khachoe Ghakyil and Kopan for the winter.

Learn more about Kopan's projects in Tsum at www.fpmt.org/projects/other/tsum.html.

Animal Liberation Sanctuary

By Tania Duratovic and Phil Hunt, project coordinators

Animal Liberation Sanctuary is a sanctuary established near Kopan primarily to care for animals that Lama Zopa Rinpoche has rescued himself or on his request. New facilities for rescued animals are currently being developed to provide the animals with a more suitable environment.

The goats who were in quarantine at Khachoe Ghakyil Nunnery have settled in with the main flock in their temporary shelter at the monastery. But now with 35 goats and two sheep, overcrowding is making the need to move to the new site more important than ever. With building work recommencing after monsoon, a new treatment room is being added to avoid exposing the animals to the extremely poor conditions at the central veterinary hospital. The on-site treatment room will allow



From left to right, front: Khedrup, Shenpen, Nyingje. Back: Christmas the cow and Asanga with Shunyata leaning on him. Animal Liberation Sanctuary, Nepal, October 2012. Photo by Phil Hunt.

medical procedures to be carried out in sterile and safe conditions, and it will also prevent the need for travel, which is stressful for sick animals. Even though the goats and sheep will be moving to better facilities soon, there is still only limited space for new arrivals.

The sanctuary, including the treatment room, shelters and stupas, daily food and veterinary treatment, are supported by charitable contributions, which as explained by Khensur Rinpoche Lama Lhundrup are considered to be the equivalent of doing animal liberation yourself.

You can read a longer update from the sanctuary at mandalamagazine.org.

For more information on the Animal Liberation Sanctuary, please visit www.fpmt.org/projects/other/alp.html.

Losang Namgyal Rinpoche's Projects: Bringing Dharma to Remote Nepal

Losang Namgyal Rinpoche was born in 1970 in Okhaldhunga, Nepal, and came to Kopan Monastery as a novice monk in 1980. In the 1990s, Losang Namgyal Rinpoche spent time in New Zealand, Singapore and the United States interpreting at FPMT centers.

"Then I came back to Kopan, because I am supposed to be a local lama for the Tamang community," he told *Mandala*. "The population is very remote and very poor. Khensur Rinpoche Lama Lhundrup advised me that I should help them instead of translating and going overseas. Slowly it developed and I visited many different villages to see for myself how difficult their lives

are. Then I thought that in whichever way I could, I would help them to solve their problems, and set up different centers in those villages."

Losang Namgyal Rinpoche founded the Buddhist Awareness Center (BAC) in 1998 in Kathmandu, which now has more than a dozen branch centers and offers instruction on prayers and practices and courses on Dharma and meditation to local lay people. He also consults with Lama Zopa Rinpoche on how best to expand his work. "Lama Zopa Rinpoche and I decided to have a project to help the people in the remote communities where there is not much Dharma or facilities for practice," he said. "The main purpose is to go into the villages and promote Dharma by helping in whichever way we can."

The Lama Zopa Rinpoche Bodhichitta Fund (see page 36) has donated US\$100,000 toward the building of these kinds of projects in villages throughout Nepal. To date, four stupas, three prayer wheels and two gompas for doing nyung nās have been completed. Two more stupas and two more gompas are being built. Losang Namgyal Rinpoche has also overseen the construction of a school in Okhaldhunga.

Losang Namgyal Rinpoche works with a group of monks and BAC members to help develop these projects. "When we first go to a village, we ask them about their priorities and needs in order to have Dharma," he explained. "If they want a stupa or a gompa or a prayer wheel, then we discuss that issue and how they can contribute. Often, they volunteer to find the basic materials and do the manual labor. When they are willing to provide those things, then we gather the other materials and organize how to send all these things from Kathmandu. We discuss in such a way as to ensure that work will go on, even after we've left. Working



Stupa construction in Nuwakot, Nepal. Photo courtesy of Losang Namgyal Rinpoche.

together is the best way so that the villagers get involved and will take care of it after it is completed.”

He has also worked with local people to set up the Namgyal Rinpoche Foundation in order to support the different aspects of the projects, offer scholarships to students, and promote the preservation of local culture as well as of the environment through tree planting programs and distribution of solar-powered lights and efficient wood-burning stoves. The foundation also supports medical, hospice and water projects for villages and the training of local lamas and monks.

You can learn more about Losang Namgyal Rinpoche’s projects at www.nrfoundation.org.np.

Himalayan Buddhist Meditation Centre: A Calm Space in Kathmandu’s Chaos

By Arya Cayton, spiritual program coordinator

In 1982, the Himalayan Buddhist Meditation Centre (HBMC) was founded in Kathmandu as the Himalayan Yogic Institute (HYI) by Pam and Karuna Cayton, long-time students of Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa Rinpoche. Thirty years later, their daughter Arya became the spiritual program coordinator there, bringing her experience and fresh perspective to the city center.



Courtyard at Himalayan Buddhist Meditation Centre, Kathmandu, Nepal. Photo courtesy of HBMC.

Himalayan Buddhist Meditation Centre is located in the center of Thamel, the bustling tourist hub of Kathmandu. During Nepal’s peak tourist season in late autumn, the sky is blue, the weather pleasant and the streets of Thamel are crowded with backpackers gearing up for the mountains and enjoying cappuccinos and a bit of comfort food before heading to more rugged terrain. HBMC offers these tourists as well as the expats and locals in Kathmandu a place where they can escape the busyness of the city while savoring a taste of what may lead them to ultimate happiness, something even the best chocolate cake in Thamel can’t compete with.

Our center focuses on providing quality, short introductory programs. We currently offer guided meditation classes four evenings a week, with a different teacher every day. On Sunday mornings, a teacher, often from Kopan Monastery or Nunnery, teaches on basic Buddhist concepts. We try to keep these topics at an introductory level and put the primary focus on how Buddhism can be practical and immediately applied to everyday life. Our classes include time for questions and discussion. We also have regular day-long introductory courses in Buddhism and meditation. In addition, we have “Movie and Momo Nights” on Mondays and Saturdays. We now have a projector so we can screen Buddhist related films and documentaries on our rooftop terrace. Tea, popcorn and momos [Himalayan dumplings] are available and we open up a discussion after the movie for those interested in staying.

We’re starting a new program offering guided pilgrimages to the many holy sites around the Kathmandu Valley as well as longer trips in Nepal, Bhutan, India and Tibet. A geshe or experienced teacher accompanies the tour and gives teachings and meditations throughout the day so that the focus is on spiritual development and not just sightseeing. Nothing quite like this is currently available in Kathmandu, so we’re excited to offer a beneficial way for people to see the holy sites while also getting an introduction to Buddhism and meditation.

For more information about the Himalayan Buddhist Meditation Centre activities, please visit www.fpmt-hbmc.org.

You can read more about Arya Cayton’s experience coming to HBMC and Pam Cayton’s reflections on its founding at mandalamagazine.org.



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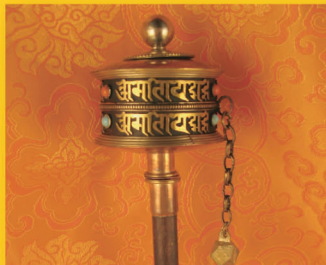
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This future library and school at Lawudo Gompa and Retreat Centre will provide much needed education to local children in the region, April 2012. Photo by Simone Fry.

Renovation and Expansion at Lawudo

By Ven. Lobsang Deden

At an altitude of 13,000 feet (4,000 meters), Lawudo Gompa and Retreat Centre is situated in the Solu Khumbu region of Nepal not far from Mount Everest and is undergoing complete renovation and expansion. Lawudo is the site where Lama Zopa Rinpoche's previous incarnation, Lawudo Lama Kunsang Yeshe, meditated and attained profound realizations – it's virtually the root of the FPMT.

“Many people advised me to tear down the old gompa and build a completely new one,” recalled Sangay Sherpa, Lama Zopa Rinpoche's brother and Lawudo's director. “But after having thought about this, I decided to conserve the old building, and in doing so, somehow conserve all the effort, all the love and devotion that has manifested there. Our mother, in fact all of us, including Lama Zopa Rinpoche, worked so hard and tirelessly to actualize this project. We practically built the gompa with our bare hands. We had no money at all, but because the local people requested him to erect the gompa to meet their spiritual needs, Lama Zopa insisted.”

Currently, in order to complete the new library and Dharma school that will serve the local community and center guests, as well as the new gompa, tons of building materials are brought to Lawudo under extremely harsh conditions. Construction is expected to continue for the following two to three years.

For more information and opportunities to support Lawudo Gompa and Retreat Centre, please visit www.lawudo-gompa-project.com.

Lama Zopa Rinpoche Helps Move Ganden Yiga Chözin Meditation and Retreat Centre

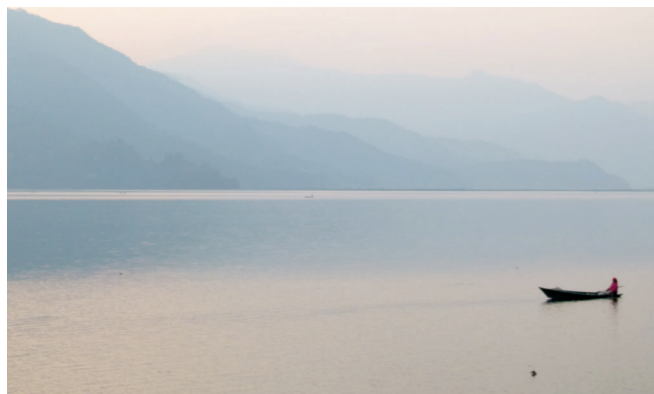
By Gerald Blomeyer, project coordinator

Pokhara is a popular tourist destination 124 miles (200 kilometers) west of Kathmandu. A warm valley at an altitude of 2,296 feet (700 meters), it offers views of several of the world's tallest mountains and access to Fewa Lake, the second largest lake in Nepal. Treks around Annapurna start here and the conditions for paragliding, kayaking, mountain biking and more are optimal. It is a nature lover's paradise with over 500 species of butterflies and birds.

In 1992, Lama Zopa Rinpoche bought a small plot with a fabulous lake view on what was then the outskirts of Pokhara Lakeside. In the following years, Jean-Luc Monné developed it to provide a peaceful place to study and contemplate Tibetan Buddhist teachings. Lama Zopa Rinpoche gave it the name Ganden Yiga Chözin (Maitreya's Pure Land) Meditation and Retreat Centre when he came with Dagri Rinpoche in January 1996 to bless it.

In 2005, an American monk, Ven. Losang Yeshe, moved to the center as resident teacher. When tourism to Pokhara revived in 2006 after the Maoist uprising stabilized, students, mainly between 20 and 35 years old, came from all over the world. Although the courses were quite small, participants often commented on what a life-changing experience our weekend course was for them.

In two-and-a-half days, students are offered an introduction to Buddhist philosophy in order to develop the mind through teachings on compassion and wisdom; meditation in order to relax the mind and make it peaceful, clear and serviceable; and yoga in order to relax and bring balance to the body and mind. The center's retreat facilities served us well up until three years



Fewa Lake, Pokhara, Nepal, 2012

ago when the most recent tourist boom started. The increased number of tourists has been positive for the center, but recently we've had to turn students away at the weekend, as 26 participants is our absolute capacity.

Lama Zopa Rinpoche visited the center in February 2012 and confirmed that it was time to move two miles (three kilometers) further down the road to a property overlooking Fewa Lake. Rinpoche gave us a donation of 1 million Nepali rupees (US\$11,386) with the words: "Is that enough?"

Ganden Yiga Chözin Meditation and Retreat Centre is currently in the process of securing the property and preparing a fundraising campaign. You can learn more at www.pokharabuddhistcentre.com and www.facebook.com/FPMPokhara.

100 Million Mani Retreat at Bigu Nunnery

Every year since 2009, the Lama Zopa Rinpoche Bodhichitta Fund (see page 36) has sponsored at least one 100 million mani retreat at Bigu Nunnery in Nepal for US\$7,000, which covers the cost of offering food to the 70 nuns that participate, sponsoring a

qualified geshe to give lam-rim teachings throughout, providing a small offering to each participant and making a general donation to the nunnery itself. This year, the fund sponsored two such retreats, specifically dedicating the second to Lama Zopa Rinpoche's long life.

For more on the Lama Zopa Rinpoche Bodhichitta Fund, please visit www.fpmt.org/projects/fpmt/lzrbf.html.

Proposed Project in Lumbini

Lama Zopa Rinpoche was offered a small amount of land in Lumbini, Nepal, the birthplace of the historical Buddha. Rinpoche has expressed a wish to build a four-story statue of Shakyamuni Buddha and possibly a small retreat facility with accommodations for two or three geshe or Western teachers who would be available to introduce Buddha's teachings and answer questions. Currently, FPMT's proposal is being considered by the minister of tourism in Lumbini. ♦

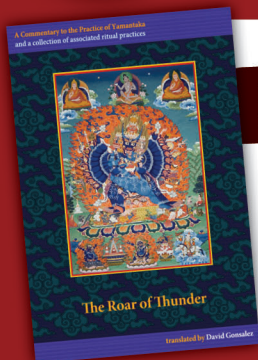
Visit mandalamagazine.org for more stories and photos of FPMT activities in Nepal.



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The Roar of Thunder - A Commentary To The Practice of Yamantaka

This book contains two extraordinary commentaries on the generation and completion stage of Yamantaka Vajrabhairava composed by Ngulchu Dharmabhadra and the Fifth Ling Rinpoche Losang Lungtog Tenzin Trinley.

By David Gonzalez

Dechen Ling Press Will Be Publishing a Number of Previously Unavailable Commentaries

Forthcoming releases will include commentaries such as the **Six Yogas of Naropa**, **Lama Chopa**, **Chakrasamvara Body Mandala**, and many others, as well as **Secret Revelations of Chittamani Tara** and **Healing Nectar of Immortality** that will be published in the very near future.



DHARMA AND THE MODERN WORLD



His Holiness the Dalai Lama arriving at Kurukulla Center being greeted by Lama Zopa Rinpoche (front center), Sikyong Lobsang Sangay (far left), Geshe Tenley (left of Rinpoche) and others, October 2012. Photo by Kadri Kurgun.

Kurukulla Center, Medford, Massachusetts, U.S., October 2012. Photo by Ali Kaukas.

Think Big:

His Holiness the Dalai Lama Visits Kurukulla Center

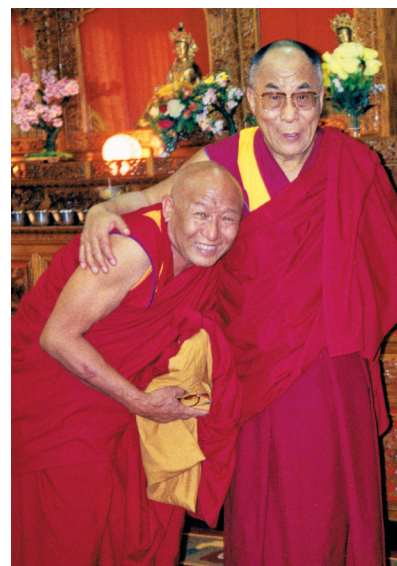
By Sean González, event coordinator
and current center director

On October 16, 2012, His Holiness the Dalai Lama spent part of the afternoon at Kurukulla Center in Medford, Massachusetts, in the United States, near Boston. His Holiness was welcomed by Sikyong Lobsang Sangay, Lama Zopa Rinpoche, Kurukulla Center resident teacher Geshe Tenley, the mayor of Medford and many other community leaders. An enthusiastic crowd of nearly 2,000 people of all ages – including Kurukulla Center members, Boston-area Tibetans and Kurukulla Center neighbors – listened to His Holiness speak on universal human values and inter-religious harmony. For part of his talk, His Holiness spoke directly to the gathered Tibetan community in Tibetan. He expressed his admiration for how they have preserved their language and culture in exile and said that this, along with the strong spirit of Tibetans in Tibet, serves as grounds for hope for the future.

“His Holiness is coming to Kurukulla Center!” I will never forget hearing those few words that brought so many people and diverse communities together. With the announcement of the visit, Kurukulla’s former resident teacher Geshe Tsulga-la’s vision and precious gift to the center started to ripen and a journey of faith and joyous effort began.

Geshe Tsulga-la, who passed away in November 2010 [see *Mandala* April-June 2011], always had a special relationship with His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama. Three weeks prior to Geshe-la’s passing, he went to see His Holiness one last time. He asked His Holiness to not pray for him, but to live long and come see his students at Kurukulla Center. His Holiness’ schedule is quite full, and a visit to our center seemed very unlikely for many years. Needless to say, we were very surprised when in December 2011 we received confirmation that, with the kind support of Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)’s hosting group, His Holiness would modify his planned visit to Boston to include a quick stop at Kurukulla Center. His Holiness was delivering on his promise to Geshe Tsulga-la at the first possible opportunity.

As exciting as the news was, we had to get to work and solve a serious logistical problem: our gumpa can only hold a little over 70 people! We have a growing community of more than 1,500 students and supporters plus a local Tibetan community of around 700. Using all our backyard space, we figured we could only host 400-500 people. The thought of hand-picking 500 lucky students from a combined community of more than 2,200 was unpalatable, but our options seemed limited; we simply didn’t have the physical space. Geshe Tsulga-la’s nephew and current resident teacher, Geshe Tenley, gave those of us organizing the event one directive: “Allow your minds to be expansive – think big versus small.”



*Geshe Tsulga and His Holiness the Dalai Lama,
December 2002. Photo courtesy
of Kurukulla Center.*

DHARMA AND THE MODERN WORLD

When I first came to the Dharma in 2004, I knew very little about Buddhism but felt at home from the first moment that I met Geshe Tsulga-la. As a student I often was apologetic to Geshe-la for not studying enough, but he would tell me that much benefit would come through how I lived the Dharma. Once before boarding a flight to India, Geshe-la looked at me and said, “You go next time.” But going to India seemed so impossible to my mind, and so I never spoke about it with him again.

Two years later, leaving for India on what we knew would be his last trip, the last thing Geshe-la did before boarding was look me in the eyes and said, “You go.” The guru had

It was this kind of expansive thinking that led us to the solution for our space problem. The backyards of Kurukulla Center and the four adjacent properties were divided by fences, but were otherwise one large, open space. We sat down with our neighbors and discussed the historic opportunity to have His Holiness literally in our backyards. As it turns out, they had fond memories of His Holiness’ 2003 visit and gave us their support to remove the fences, affording us the space we needed.

To accommodate more than 2,000 people, we hired a 279-by-50-by-22-foot (85-by-15-by-7-meter) tent that used a special structure that allowed the tent canopy to rest on a ribcage of metal arches without inner posts, creating an

When confronted with challenges resulting from our karma, I advised my team leads to avoid pushing in the direction that was causing the greatest resistance, especially if it was “clearly” the “right” and “best” way to proceed. This resistance coupled with a sense of certainty is the warning sign that our dualistic mind is busy at work undermining our goals.

spoken and all doubt dissolved, and three months later I found myself at Sera Je, where I stayed for three weeks at Geshe Tsulga-la’s House 2A. The trip was the most amazing one of my life and taught me how seemingly impossible things are quite possible if we allow our minds to flow free from the shackles of preconceptions and dualistic views.

I was reminded of this experience throughout the entire process of organizing the event. The hardest thing that I had to deal with was the limited mind, which Lama Yeshe had wisely encouraged us to overcome:

Our problem is that inside us there’s a mind going, “Impossible, impossible, impossible. I can’t, I can’t, I can’t.” We have to banish that mind from this solar system. Anything is possible; everything is possible. Sometimes you feel that your dreams are impossible, but they’re not. Human beings have great potential; they can do anything. The power of the mind is incredible, limitless. (Manjushri Institute, UK, July 1977)

impressive open space free from obstacles. To avoid damaging our neighbors’ property with the height of the tent, we convinced a local arborist to tie up (instead of cut off) the branches of the backyard trees. Against even their own expectations, they did such an amazing job with the trees that we were able to fit the largest tent possible, allowing all attending to enjoy a direct, unobstructed view of His Holiness. After the event was done, our tent vendor admitted that our vision for how we wanted to proceed was so outrageous that they never actually thought that we would be able to do it – they were amazed!

The event was broadcast live to over 30 countries, and we are now working on a video of it. Comcast, our production partner, has syndicated the event, broadcasting it regularly to more than 20 million viewers.

Below from left: Young ticket holders waiting to see His Holiness. Photo by Ali Kaukas; His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama speaking at Kurukulla Center, close up and in the big tent, October 2012. Photos by Kadri Kurgun.



Lama Zopa Rinpoche at Kurukulla Center

The day after His Holiness the Dalai Lama's visit to Kurukulla Center, Lama Zopa Rinpoche was the guest of honor at an evening reception at Kurukulla Center for all those who had taken part in making His Holiness' visit a success. Rinpoche gave a teaching to those in attendance. A video of this teaching is available on Kurukulla Center's YouTube channel.

Earlier in the day, Rinpoche gave a teaching at Lama Yeshe Wisdom Archive that was streamed live to students in Singapore and around the world. Rinpoche taught on remembering death, gave commentary on a brief lam-rim teaching by Ngulchu Dharmabhadra and spoke about the five powers. A video and transcript of this talk are available on the Archive's website on the E-letter No. 113 October 2012 page.

www.youtube.com/user/KurukullaCenter
www.lamayeshe.com



Lama Zopa Rinpoche and Geshe Tenley after His Holiness' visit, Kurukulla Center, October 2012. Photo by Kadri Kurgun.

Events of this scale and nature bring about two huge challenges: purification of individual and collective karma, and physical exhaustion. When confronted with challenges resulting from our karma, I advised my team leads to avoid pushing in the direction that was causing the greatest resistance, especially if it was "clearly" the "right" and "best" way to proceed. This resistance coupled with a sense of certainty is the warning sign that our dualistic mind is busy at work undermining our goals. When we were able to avoid this pitfall, obstacles seemed to disappear "on their own." To combat our bodies understandable exhaustion, we all remembered Geshe-la's commitment to us, and the unbelievable loving-kindness and caring that he had for all of us. Perseverance came about easily and almost effortlessly.

In total, we had more than 250 volunteers, who worked together efficiently and harmoniously. It was the most extreme and complex event that any of us had ever put together, but we all enjoyed ourselves and experienced the energizing power of faith and joyous effort.

Kurukulla Center's community couldn't possibly do all the work alone and in the end, we relied on the tireless help and

support of Medford Mayor Michael McGlynn and his staff, the Tibetan Association of Boston, and our neighbors. I found it surreal and inspiring when at a pre-event meeting with our neighbors, we explained the strict and complex security measures that would impact their daily lives and the only response that we got was, "What can we do to help you?" The kindness and generosity of everyone was humbling to all of us at Kurukulla Center.

Ten days after the event I became Kurukulla Center's director, and I am thrilled that my entire event team has agreed to stay on to form the new Kurukulla Center Management Committee. To all of them, the Kurukulla Center community, the city of Medford and the Tibetan Association of Boston, I express my sincerest gratitude for all their hard work and support.

You can see more photos of His Holiness' visit to Kurukulla Center with *Mandala's* online content at mandalamagazine.org.

You can watch the video of His Holiness' visit on Kurukulla Center's YouTube Channel, www.youtube.com/user/KurukullaCenter.



Photos from left: His Holiness receiving honorary Medford citizenship and the key to the city of Medford from Mayor Michael McGlynn, October 2012; Geshe Tenley with Kurukulla Center event volunteer team leaders, including event coordinator and new center director Sean González (front row, third from left) and outgoing center director Debra Thornburg (front row, third from right). Photos by Kadri Kurgun.

Lama Zopa Rinpoche Offers Rare Oral Transmission

Lama Zopa Rinpoche began a series of oral transmissions on October 27, 2012, at Drati Khangtsen in Sera Je Monastery. During the week-long event, Rinpoche offered transmissions from a collection of five volumes of texts and practices related to Most Secret Hayagriva.

volumes include compilations from many Indian and Tibetan masters. The majority of Most Secret Hayagriva transmissions were brought from India to Tibet by the great master Vairochana Lotsawa. These were preserved in Tibet within the Nyingma tradition, and the founder of Sera Je had an especially strong connection to this practice. Upon its founding, Lama Tsongkhapa gave his blessing for this lineage of Hayagriva to be adopted as the principal protector of the monastery and Sera Je has maintained a strong relationship with Hayagriva ever since.

In addition to the transmissions, Rinpoche gave teachings. “Many of the monks mentioned that the teachings Rinpoche gave were different than what they normally got,” Rinpoche’s attendant Ven. Roger Kunsang said. “You could really see he was holding their attention, especially the younger ones. Monks were really impressed, I think, with Rinpoche’s style of very practical teaching – how you practice in daily life given with Rinpoche’s colorfully flavored modern examples.”

This year’s teaching event concluded on November 3 with a long life puja offered to Lama Zopa Rinpoche. More than 1,500 monks as well as the abbot of Sera Je attended. The transmission series is planned to continue at Drati Khangtsen annually to complete the cycle of teachings.

On November 6, Lhabab Duchen (Buddha’s descent from the God Realm of Thirty-three), Sera Je Monastery offered a long life puja to Khen Rinpoche Geshe Delek, Sera’s abbot; Khensur Rinpoche Jampa Tegchok, who has taught at several FPMT centers; Khensur Rinpoche Losang Tsering, the main teacher of the Kopan monks at Sera Je; Khensur Kangyur Rinpoche, who taught for many years at Buddha House in Australia; Khensur Rinpoche Geshe Palden, a previous abbot of Sera Je; and Lama Zopa Rinpoche. More than 3,000 monks were in attendance.

To keep up to date with Lama Zopa Rinpoche’s schedule, visit www.fpmt.org/teachers/zopa/schedule.



Top: Long life puja at Sera Je Monastery, Bylakuppe, India, November 6, 2012. Photo by Ven. Roger Kunsang.

Lama Zopa Rinpoche during the Most Secret Hayagriva oral transmission at Drati Khangtsen, Sera Je Monastery, India, October 27, 2012. Photo by Ven. Roger Kunsang.

The series of transmissions has rarely been given publicly since the beginning of the Tibetan diaspora and Lama Zopa Rinpoche is one of only a few lamas outside of Tibet who holds the lineage.

Sera IMI House and Drati Khangtsen organized the event, which was attended by nearly 1,000 monks. Among the ordained were several rinpoches including the young tulku Domo Geshe Rinpoche, Geshe Sengye Rinpoche and Kalka Damtsig Dorje Rinpoche, whose previous incarnation authored three of the compositions included in the collection of Most Secret Hayagriva materials. Many geshe also attended. More than a hundred lay students were there, including many Indian and Mongolian students as well as Chinese students from various Asian countries and Westerners.

In addition to the compositions by Mongolian lama Kalka Damtsig Dorje, the five



*His Holiness the Dalai Lama with Geshe Lhundub Sopa in 1989.
Photo by Kalleen Mortensen.*

The Dalai Lama Completes His Studies

By Geshe Lhundub Sopa

Geshe Lhundub Sopa has led an extraordinary life by any measure. Born in 1923 in Tsang, Tibet, to farmers, he eventually became an accomplished scholar at Sera Je Monastery in Lhasa, where he taught Lama Yeshe. He witnessed firsthand the shifting political tides as Chinese Communist forces bared down on Tibet, eventually fleeing into exile in 1959. In the early 1960s, he went to the United States and joined the faculty of the University of Wisconsin in 1967. In time, Geshe Sopa became a full professor and trained many prominent scholars of Tibetan Buddhism. At the same time, he continued to serve as a teacher for important Tibetan teachers, including Lama Zopa Rinpoche and Yangsi Rinpoche. He established Deer Park Buddhist Center in Oregon, Wisconsin, which hosted the first Kalachakra initiation given by His Holiness the Dalai Lama in the West in 1981. Geshe Sopa, now retired, continues to publish scholarly works on Tibetan Buddhism.

Like a Waking Dream is Geshe Sopa's autobiography, published by Wisdom Publication and edited by Paul Donnelly, one of Geshe Sopa's students. In the book, Geshe-la shares detailed memories of his youth and early days in the Tibetan monastic system, giving valuable insight into a now-vanished world. He offers a unique and heartfelt perspective on exile and establishing Tibetan Buddhism in the West. We're happy to be able to offer you a short excerpt from Geshe-la's autobiography in Mandala.

Though His Holiness had already taken leadership of Tibet by the end of 1950, he didn't take his geshe examination until 1959. Shortly afterward, things got much worse, and His Holiness fled to India. Interestingly, everything came to a head right after His Holiness finished his education.

His Holiness Bestows Jangchup Lamrim

On November 30, 2012, His Holiness the Dalai Lama began a series of teachings and transmissions on 18 classic lam-rim commentaries at the request of His Eminence Ling Rinpoche. The teachings and transmissions took place over two weeks at Gaden Monastery and Drepung Monastery in Doeguling Tibetan Settlement, Mundgod, India. The historic event was organized by the Jangchup Lamrim Teaching Organizing Committee (JLTOC).

As part of FPMT's mission to preserve the Mahayana tradition, Lama Zopa Rinpoche offered to support these rare and precious teachings. FPMT's Preserving the Lineage Fund contributed US\$370,000 to offer vegetarian food to all of the 12,000-15,000 monks in attendance; sponsor the travel of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and entourage; fund a sound system for the event; and support the printing of 50,000 copies of five different texts for the event and bags for the texts being offered. In addition, FPMT's Education Services and Translation Offices provided 23 texts in English, Chinese, German, Spanish and French for a new critical edition of the 18 Jangchup Lamrim commentaries that has been produced for the teaching series by JLTOC.

A live webcast of the teachings was available for those unable to attend in person. The series will continue in the latter part of 2013, when His Holiness will offer these teachings and transmissions at Sera Monastery in Lugsung Samdupling Tibetan Settlement, Bylakuppe, India.

For more information on the teachings, texts and for video, visit www.jangchuplamrim.org.

You can learn more about the Preserving the Lineage Fund and make a contribution at www.fpmt.org/projects/fpmt/plf.html.

DHARMA AND THE MODERN WORLD



Geshe Sopa at Lama Zopa Rinpoche's house in Aptos, California, 2009. Photo by Kalleen Mortensen.

... At the time of his geshe examination, the Dalai Lama had to go to each of the Three Seats: first Drepung, then Sera and then Ganden. At each monastery, he defended his thesis against the abbots and other high scholars who asked him questions. He also had to get up and debate with these scholars. The final examination took place during the Mönlam Festival, when all the monks of the Three Seats came to Lhasa.

Each of the Three Seats selected several scholars to ask His Holiness questions in this examination.

During the Mönlam Festival there were three wet assemblies [assemblies with tea and a meal] and

noon and evening sessions. The scholars asking the questions in the morning tended to be younger, though they were still advanced scholars. During the noon session they would be intermediate-level scholars, and in the evening session the interrogators would be the abbots and the old geshe and lamas. In the case of Sera Je, the abbot selected the monks for this task, and I was chosen to be one of these examiners. Once we were selected, we had to prepare ourselves. We didn't know exactly what the subject would be until it was almost time, but we would know the general area based on which session we were doing. Since I was doing the questioning during the noontime session, I knew that the topic would either be Perfection of Wisdom or Madhyamaka. It wasn't necessarily the case that scholars in the Madhyamaka class, for example, would be assigned Madhyamaka subjects. It was simply a matter of the abbot selecting good scholars, regardless of their class. That was a truly wonderful experience for me. Being chosen was a great privilege, but it was also intimidating. I didn't want to look foolish in front of all those great scholars and, of course, in front of His Holiness himself.

On the day of the debate, all the great scholars from the Three Seats were there, as were government officials, the abbots of Sera, Drepung and Ganden, the tsenshaps [His Holiness' debate teachers and partners], and His Holiness' two tutors. And there I was, debating in front of all these people.

three dry assemblies each day. In the morning the Dalai Lama had to go to a place in Lhasa called Sunghöra. This is also where the Ganden Throne Holder gave teachings during Mönlam. This place had several levels. The Ganden Throne Holder and the abbots sat on the highest level, the geshe who were receiving their degree that year sat on the next level down, and the rest of the monks sat on the huge stone floor. During the morning dry assembly His Holiness had to defend his thesis there on the subject of logic, mostly on the works of Dharmakirti. At noontime His Holiness had to answer questions on Perfection of Wisdom and Madhyamaka in the big outer courtyard of the Jokhang Temple, which is called the Khyamra. Finally he was examined on Vinaya and Abhidharma at the same place in the evening.

Every college at each of the Three Seats had to select scholars to examine His Holiness in the morning,

On the day of the debate, all the great scholars from the Three Seats were there, as were government officials, the abbots of Sera, Drepung and Ganden, the tsenshaps [His Holiness' debate teachers and partners], and His Holiness' two tutors. And there I was, debating in front of all these people. I asked His Holiness questions, and he had to respond. It was not easy. There is some film footage of this session at the Khyamra. I can be seen debating His Holiness, though my face is not shown. The camera was behind me facing His Holiness, so you can only see me from the back. You can't tell that it is me, but I remember it, and I can recognize myself. It was just coincidence that I was the one who got filmed; not everybody who debated there was recorded.

I had to dress up for this event, so I had to borrow a good robe from one of my students because I didn't have anything all that nice. I didn't have to wear the silken kind of clothing that high



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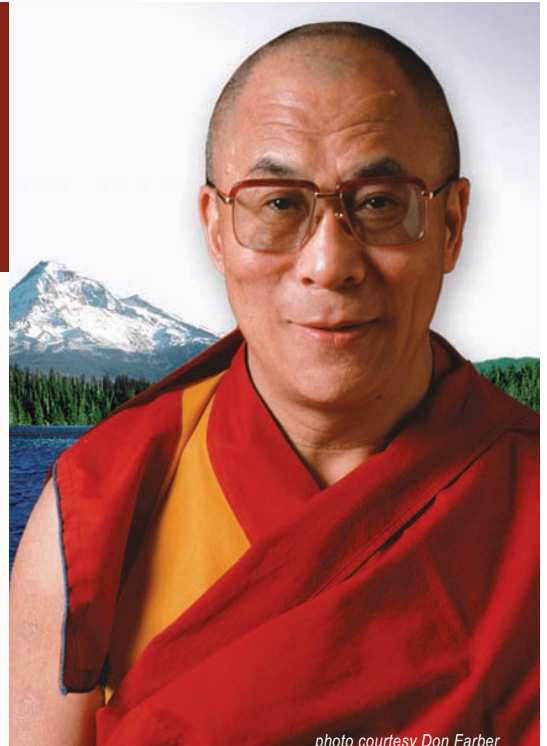


photo courtesy Don Farber

www.maitripa.org ~ www.dalailamaportland2013.net

officials and some lamas wore to debate His Holiness, but we ordinary monks had to at least wear good-quality, new robes. In our normal lives we wore pretty rotten clothing. That kind of thing was just not important. As the debate began we had to wear the outer robe a certain way then shift it to another way. Finally, we folded it down around the waist, and the actual debate started. That was the traditional, ceremonial way of doing it.

My debate topic was the Perfection of Wisdom literature, and I was assigned to ask His Holiness about the subject of the buddha-nature. In Mahayana Buddhism, it is said that although everybody has the potential to become a buddha, that potential is usually sleeping. Through study and learning, this potential can

be awakened, and this is called *awakening the lineage*. There are many sutras on this subject, and it is discussed in Maitreya's *Uttaratantra* in many passages. I recall that it was one of those passages that formed the basis of my question to His Holiness. His Holiness reminded me a couple years later that this was the question that I had put to him during his exam, and we joked about it a little bit. Then he said that since I had done this, I had to go to America to awaken the buddha lineage there.

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Reminiscences of Geshe Sopa

By Roger Jackson

In coordination with the publication of Geshe Lhundub Sopa's autobiography Like a Waking Dream, Mandala asked several of Geshe Sopa's students to share their stories of Geshe-la. We've collected more than a dozen reminiscences, which we've published at mandalamagazine.org. We share one of the contributions with you here.

I first heard the name Geshe Sopa in the fall of 1974, when my girlfriend (now wife) Pam Percy and I were attending the seventh Kopan course. Having survived and ultimately thrived at the sixth course and spent most of the summer studying at the Tibetan Library in Dharamsala, we both had begun to ponder what to do

who was, to boot, among the most respected gurus of my teachers at Kopan, Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa Rinpoche.

I was accepted into the Buddhist Studies program, and Pam and I moved to Madison late in the summer of 1975. We shared a house on Lake Mendota Drive with Beth and Elyse Mergenthaler. Geshe Sopa was living in a small house just a few doors down, with his eccentric but indispensable assistant, Elvin Jones. Geshe-la had been in Madison for eight years at that point, and already had seen a number of fine scholars through the Buddhist Studies program at the university, including Jeffrey Hopkins. He also had given Buddhist teachings

Geshe-la's own inclinations always have been monastic, scholarly and conservative, yet he developed a remarkable ability both to teach and counsel a group of disciples whose personal, intellectual and spiritual needs were all over the map.

when we returned to the United States in December, after 15 months on the road.

By nature inclined to scholarship, I had begun to think that graduate work in Buddhism might be the ideal course for me. Serendipitously, a letter arrived from our friend Beth Newman (née Solomon), who had just moved to Madison, where she was studying at the University of Wisconsin with Geshe Sopa. "Roger," she wrote, "he's your intellectual dream come true." I'm not sure that my hairs stood on end or tears spontaneously formed in my eyes when I read this, but I was overjoyed to know that there was someone in the States who was both a university professor and a Buddhist master – and

off and on, but never, so far as I know, within a formal organization.

By the fall of 1975, however, the number of Kopan and Dharamsala veterans in Madison, combined with interested locals, was sufficient that some structure seemed necessary. Thus was founded Ganden Mahayana Center, which began with Geshe-la teaching Tsongkhapa's *Lamrim Chenmo* to a small group every Sunday morning in his living room. Typically, after beginning with a long, slow recitation of "The Foundation of All Good Qualities," refuge and bodhichitta prayers, a mandala offering, and a brief meditation, he would quote from memory a verse from Shantideva's *Way of the Bodhisattva*,

then comment on it with great energy, insight and humor, before turning at last to Tsongkhapa's text. (His discourses on the *Lamrim Chenmo* would continue not just for years but for decades and are being issued by Wisdom Publications as a multi-volume set.)

As the group surrounding him grew, Geshe-la moved to a larger house across the street, teaching other texts during the week and beginning a tradition of summer courses involving discourses and initiations by visiting Gelug masters (including Lamas Yeshe and Zopa Rinpoche) and, eventually, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, who first visited in 1979. In 1981, in anticipation of His Holiness' visit to confer the first-ever Kalachakra initiation in the West, Ganden Mahayana Center became Deer Park Buddhist Center, and Geshe-la moved to the property in Oregon, Wisconsin, where he still resides (though the split-level ranch house now has been supplemented by a residential annex, a Kalachakra temple, a stupa, and the magnificent Deer Park temple, which was inaugurated by His Holiness in 2008).

While I lived in Madison, from 1975 until 1983, I was closely involved with Geshe-la's centers and was able to witness first-hand how he dealt with the motley crew of American Buddhists who came to study with him: a mix of students, working people and unreconstructed Dharma Bums who were

alike in their dedication to the Buddha's teachings but not always certain how to apply them as lay people in the West. Geshe-la's own inclinations always have been monastic, scholarly and conservative, yet he developed a remarkable ability both to teach and counsel a group of disciples whose personal, intellectual and spiritual needs were all over the map. The name he was given at ordination, Lhundub Sopa – "spontaneous patience" – surely was prophetic, for it was a quality he would manifest again and again over the years, as he dealt with our neuroses, off-the-wall questions and crises of faith, all quite sincere, but far from what his geshe training had prepared him for.

From the time I first met him, my relationship with Geshe-la has been dual, for he has not only been my principal spiritual teacher but also my graduate-school instructor, my dissertation advisor and a scholarly collaborator. I remember with pleasure sitting in seminars at the University of Wisconsin with the likes of José Cabezón, John Makransky, Beth Solomon, Beth Simon and John Newman, working through *really* difficult Tibetan texts with Geshe-la, trying to find just the right English equivalent for a Buddhist psychological term or understand properly what it means to say that "the two truths are one in essence but have different contrapositives." This is not everyone's cup of Tibetan tea, but for those of us prone to philosophy, it seemed



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DHARMA AND THE MODERN WORLD

the very inseparability of bliss and, if not emptiness, at least mental elaboration.

As my dissertation advisor, Geshe-la showed remarkable patience and flexibility. I worked on a Tibetan commentary on the second chapter of Dharmakirti's *Pramanavarttika* (*Commentary on Valid Cognition*), the source of the classic proofs of such basic Buddhist claims as the possibility of

struggled through the knottiest passages in Thuken's text. Though Geshe-la was already in his eighties, it was Ann and I who always flagged first; even far into the session, his eyes twinkled as he eagerly awaited the next question.

So Beth was right: Geshe Sopa *was* my intellectual dream come true. But he's been far more than that: he's been a mentor, a friend, an advisor, an interlocutor and a father figure. Above

Above all, with his humility, compassion, humor and a razor-sharp mind, he's been an example – a living proof, really – of the power of Dharma.

enlightenment, the existence of past and future lives, and the liberating power of the realization of no-self. Geshe-la labored tirelessly to help me understand the text and its ideas and accepted with good humor my doubts about some of the arguments, even when my views diverged from his own. He also, not without some bemusement, encouraged my persistent enthusiasm for Kagyü traditions, especially Mahamudra.

In the late 1990s, Geshe-la asked me if I would serve as editor of his long-in-the-works translation of Thuken Chökyi Nyima's great 1802 study of Asian religious thought, *The Crystal Mirror of Philosophical Systems*. I accepted with pleasure and worked for almost a decade with him, Ann Chavez, Lenny Zwillig, Mike Sweet and others to bring the work to completion. My fondest memories of that process are of sitting for hours on end in Geshe-la's room, usually with Ann, as we

all, with his humility, compassion, humor and a razor-sharp mind, he's been an example – a living proof, really – of the power of Dharma. Whether scholars, practitioners, or both, we who have benefited from his life and teaching can only hope that we honor him by thinking clearly, living rightly and dedicating ourselves to the great task of Geshe-la's life: the benefit of sentient beings. ♦

Roger Jackson is John W. Nason Professor of Asian Studies and Religion at Carleton College in Minnesota, where he teaches South Asian and Tibetan religions. He is the author of numerous books, articles and reviews, including two books on which he collaborated with Geshe Sopa and others – *The Wheel of Time: Kalachakra in Context* and *The Crystal Mirror of Philosophical Systems: A Tibetan Study of Asian Religious Thought* – as well as a collection of essays in honor of Geshe Sopa, co-edited with José Cabezón, entitled *Tibetan Literature: Studies in Genre*.

Our coverage of 'Dharma and the Modern World' continues online:

- Read more contributions from Geshe Sopa's students, including Yangsi Rinpoche, Sharpa Tulku, Jim Blumenthal, Ann Chavez, Beth Newman, John Newman, George Propps, Tenzin Dechen Rochard and others.
- Listen to an audio interview with *Like a Waking Dream* editor Paul Donnelly.
- Özer Rinpoche explains the significance of the mummification of His Holiness the 9th Bogd Jetsün Dampa Rinpoche of Mongolia.
- Karla Ambrosio shares her experience with the Mexico-based Movement for Peace with Justice and Dignity, a grassroots group working to end the violence associated with the illegal drug trade.

For these stories and more, visit mandalamagazine.org.

Jangtse Choje Khensur Lobsang Tenzin

Monlam Teachings at Kopan

March 2- 20 2013

Jangtse Choje Khensur Losang Tenzin, the next in line to be Ganden Tripa is teaching again at Kopan Monastery following the Great Prayer Festival.

Teaching Program

- Continuing Lam Rim Chenmo with the Wisdom Chapter..
- Guyasamaja Initiation (special commitments apply)
- Extensive Guyasamaja Commentary
- Long Life Initiation

Exact dates will be posted on our website closer to the time



For bookings, check our web site or contact us on kopan@mail.com.np

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Featured Project

LAMA ZOPA RINPOCHE BODHICHITTA FUND: Generating Merit for the Entire FPMT

“We are not aware of the limitless skies of benefits we achieve from the practice of offering, what we can achieve and enjoy from life to life,” Lama Zopa Rinpoche said in *Extensive Offering Practices*. “Even while you are in samsara, you enjoy good rebirths, wealth and every happiness. Even just the samsaric perfections are amazing, without adding all those incredible realizations that allow us to offer deep benefit to sentient beings, liberating them from oceans of samsaric suffering and its cause, delusion and karma.”

The Buddha highly valued generosity, seeing it as an indispensable aspect of the path to enlightenment he taught. “All the happiness and comfort which are in the world arise from offering to the Three Rare Sublime Ones (Buddha, Dharma and Sangha),” the Buddha instructed in *Sutra Essence of Earth*. “Therefore, if one wishes happiness and comfort, attempt to make offerings to the Three Rare Sublime Ones.”

In *White Lotus Sutra* the Buddha clarifies how making the humblest of offerings to holy objects is still powerful, even if one offers with a disturbed mind:

Even just making one sound, or a cymbal offering,
Even just offering one single flower,
To the form of one who has gone to bliss (a buddha) on a stone wall,
Even if they make the offering with an angry attitude,
Those living beings will gradually see ten million buddhas.

Lama Zopa Rinpoche has mentioned many times that one of the main causes of the success of FPMT is the practice of extensive offerings that the organization supports through the Lama Zopa Rinpoche Bodhichitta Fund. With the support of the fund, resident Sangha at Rinpoche’s residences make thousands of light and water bowl offerings and dedicate them to all of FPMT’s projects, students and benefactors. In addition, Lama Zopa Rinpoche has inspired extensive offerings to be made by many FPMT centers and individual students.

You can include these extensive offerings in your own practice, as Rinpoche does in his each day. All you need to do is visualize the offerings actually made and then mentally offer them. Even just rejoicing in the offerings that are being done each day is an incredible way to create merit.

Lama Zopa Rinpoche showing Khadro-la the relics at Kachoe Dechen Ling, Rinpoche’s residence in California, in front of the 21 Tara altar, June 2012. Photo by Ven. Roger Kunsang.



Opposite page: Maitreya Buddha and offerings at Kachoe Dechen Ling, Rinpoche’s residence in California, U.S. Photo by Ven. Roger Kunsang.



TAKING CARE

Extensive offerings at Rinpoche's residences are only one way the Lama Zopa Rinpoche Bodhichitta Fund is committed to supporting a variety of Dharma activities that Rinpoche deems most beneficial. From donating funds toward the creation of holy objects around the world; to sponsoring young tulkus, high lamas and Sangha in India, Nepal, Tibet and the West; to offering support to FPMT centers, projects and services; to sponsoring Dharma retreats and events; to funding animal liberations and blessings; among many other priorities, the Lama Zopa Rinpoche Bodhichitta

Fund helps generate the merit needed for the activities of the entire organization to continue to develop and flourish.

The booklet *Extensive Offering Practices*, published by FPMT Education Services, and a poster called "Verses to Inspire Offerings," recently composed and created by Lama Zopa Rinpoche, are available through the Foundation Store (shop.fpmt.org).

To learn about the incredible array of activities supported by the Lama Zopa Rinpoche Bodhichitta Fund, see photos of this work or donate to these efforts, visit www.fpmt.org/projects/fpmt/lzrbf.

HEALTH BOOKS AND WORKSHOPS FOR THE Tibetan Buddhist Nuns in Ladakh

By Mary Wellhoner, MD, MPH

In June and July 2012, the Tibetan Buddhist nuns of Ladakh and the remote area of Zanskar received copies of the women's health book *Healthy Body, Healthy Mind* through an ongoing cooperative effort between the Dutch Foundation for Ladakhi Nuns (DFLN), the Tibetan Nuns Project and FPMT supporters. The book is a culturally appropriate adaptation of *Our Bodies, Ourselves*, a long-time bestseller on women's health and self-care in the Western world. It was originally printed by the Tibetan Nuns Project in Dharamsala in 2006 in both Tibetan and English with funding from Global Fund for Women and contains a foreword by His Holiness the Dalai Lama. A second printing of the book was made possible last year through FPMT supporters and the generosity of donors in Singapore. This additional printing allowed distribution of approximately 3,000 books to various

nunneries attending the Kalachakra for World Peace 2012 in Bodhgaya, India, with His Holiness in January, including most of the nunneries in India and Nepal.

Since few of the Ladakhi nuns were able to travel to the Kalachakra event, books were trucked overland from Delhi to Leh – at an altitude of 11,500 feet (3,500 meters) – after the roads opened in May and were delivered to the Ladakh Nuns Association, which generously served as a hub for distribution.

From left: Nuns receiving hemoglobin tests from volunteers Zia Mars (standing) and Sarah Dover; Healthy Body, Healthy Mind book distribution and workshop at Central Institute for Buddhist Studies, Leh, India, June 2012. Photos by Mary Wellhoner.



Ladakh and Zanskar are culturally Tibetan Buddhist and were protected from destruction during the Chinese invasion by geographic isolation as well as the Indian border, and they are now part of the Indian province Jammu and Kashmir. Though many areas are quite poor, particularly Zanskar, the traditional Buddhist culture remains preserved, in sharp contrast with most of Tibet. Though Ladakhis speak their own dialect, the written language is the same as Tibetan. Both Tibetan and English versions of the 200-page book were distributed to assist not only with health education but also with language study for those nuns learning English.

From the Ladakh Nuns Association, some books then traveled by minibus over the notorious road from Leh to Zanskar with a small team of health providers, several trained nuns from the Gephel Shadrubling Nunnery near Leh, and the founder of the DFLN, Marlies Bosch, stopping at nunneries along the way. Health workshops based on the book were conducted at a number of larger nunneries near Leh and many of the small remote nunneries in Zanskar. In all, 460 books were distributed to more than 500 nuns in 19 nunneries in Ladakh and Zanskar. And more are waiting to receive their copies.

In addition, our teenage volunteers Zia Mars and Sarah Dover offered hemoglobin testing to the nuns, which was quite popular with as many as a hundred nuns lining up at one event. Unfortunately, an alarming prevalence of anemia was discovered among this largely vegetarian population where diet is often lacking due to the challenges of growing green vegetables in the harsh climate and terrain. Anemia due to poor diet and reproductive blood loss is a major cause of fatigue and ill health for women around the world, decreasing their capacity for work and study. We hope to provide nutrition education in the future to help correct this deficiency. ♦

You can learn more about this project at the Dutch Foundation for Ladakhi Nuns website: www.ladakhnuns.com.

Dr. Mary Wellhoner is a student of Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa Rinpoche. She is a practicing gynecologist in Reno, Nevada, where she lives with her husband, George Mars, and two children, Zia and Kai. She completed her Masters of Public Health online through Johns Hopkins, focusing on global health.

To read more stories from our **Taking Care** section, including more on the nuns in Ladakh, visit mandalamagazine.org.

Support the continuing activities of **LAMA YESHE** and **LAMA ZOPA RINPOCHE** over many lifetimes to come by requesting your legal advisor to include a bequest to FPMT in your will or trust.

SAMPLE BEQUEST LANGUAGE:

I give, devise, and bequeath to the Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition, Inc., a California Non Profit Corporation, with offices at 1632 SE 11th Avenue, Portland, Oregon, 97214, USA _____ percent (____%) of my residuary estate; and/or the sum of _____ dollars (\$_____).

Gifts of stocks, bonds, life insurance proceeds, real estate and other assets may also be donated in your will or trust.

For more information, contact Chuck Latimer at FPMT International Office: Tel. +1 (503) 808-1586; Email: chuck@fpmt.org. Or visit: www.fpmt.org/projects/office/planned-giving.html



“Within our organization, the Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition, there are numberless projects through which you can make your belongings most beneficial for sentient beings and the teachings of the Buddha. . . . The aim of the projects is to illuminate the world from darkness, ignorance and suffering.” – LAMA ZOPA RINPOCHE

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FPMT Education Services

FPMT Education Services is the education department of FPMT International Office and develops study programs, practice materials, translations and trainings designed to foster an integration of four broad education areas: study, practice, service and behavior. These programs and materials are available through the FPMT Foundation Store, the FPMT Online Learning Center and FPMT centers worldwide.

Sutras: THE WORDS OF BUDDHA

By FPMT Education Services



Shakyamuni Buddha on a thangka belonging to Rato Khyongla Rinpoche, one of Lama Zopa Rinpoche's teachers. Painted by Peter Iseli.

Sutras are teachings attributed to the historical Buddha, Shakyamuni. The Buddha's discourses were memorized by his disciples, passed down orally over hundreds of years and eventually written down in various languages, the most complete collections of teachings being in Pali and Sanskrit.

Because sutras contain the actual words spoken by the Buddha, reproducing that speech ourselves during recitations transforms our own voices into conduits for the spreading of Buddha's teachings in the world. A special set of sutras called *dharmaparyayas*, or, "transformative teachings," including the *Sanghata Sutra*, function to transform those who hear, recite or write them out in the same way as if meeting a buddha in the flesh.

FPMT Education Services is happy to announce a new sutra-specific webpage – www.fpmt.org/education/teachings/sutras – to serve as a resource for those wishing to recite, write, print or otherwise engage with sutras in daily practice. Several sutras are already available in many languages, and we have included information about the benefits of reciting, writing or printing a particular sutra when possible.

Lama Zopa Rinpoche has offered extensive advice about the benefits of engaging with certain sutras:

Amitayus Long Life Sutra: "It's very good to print for people who have cancer and for the success of activities and projects. If a business has difficulties or is difficult to start, if

you have difficulty finding a job, or if the job is not going well, you can print many copies to make merit, not particularly for mundane success, but generally to collect merit for realizations, conditions for Dharma practice."

Sutra of Golden Light: "If you recite the *Sutra of Golden Light*, you will have good health, energy and power. All material needs will be satisfied. One will be listened to and respected by others. Whenever a question arises, the Guru will answer. One will purify eons of negative karma, meet perfect teachers, develop realizations and definitely benefit others."

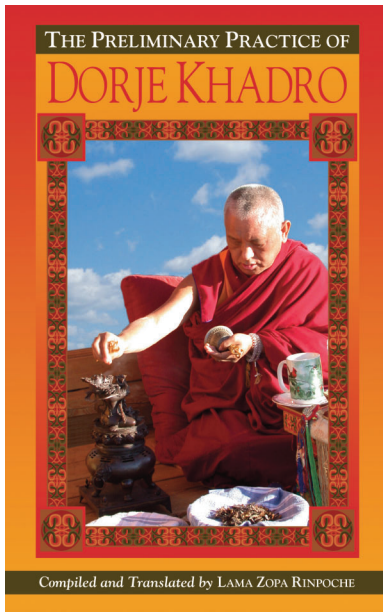
Diamond Cutter Sutra: "There's a saying in the West, 'An apple a day keeps the doctor away.' With the *Diamond Cutter Sutra* you can say, 'Goodbye doctor!' Also, you can say 'good-bye' to self-grasping, which has cheated you and totally controlled you from beginningless rebirths, and made you suffer countless times. Also, reading it is an incredible way to collect extensive merit. If you read, listen to or hear about the *Diamond Cutter Sutra* with faith, your mind collects a mind-blowing amount of merit."

Sutras have incredible power to transform one's mind and life. We hope that you will take advantage of the extensive resources available to you on our new webpage and incorporate these precious texts into your practice.

www.fpmt.org/education/teachings/sutras

See page 10 to read Maitripa College founder and president Yangsi Rinpoche's advice on how to integrate sutra practice into one's life.

Preliminary Practice of Dorje Khadro Now Available



Making burning offerings to Dorje Khadro (Vajradaka) is considered to be “a golden Dharma” passed directly from Manjushri to Lama Tsongkhapa. It was one of Lama Tsongkhapa’s heart practices and, as such, has a special connection with the Gelug lineage of Tibetan Buddhism. The practice of Dorje Khadro comes highly praised for its power to purify negative karma in general, but especially for its ability to purify obstacles caused by broken vows and samaya related to highest yoga tantra. It also assists us in assembling the most conducive conditions for success in long

retreats. This practice is encouraged as a powerful way to help those who are sick or dying and as a method to readily clear the mind of challenging disturbing emotions.

In order to support practitioners of Dorje Khadro, FPMT Education Services has just published a new book, *The Preliminary Practice of Dorje Khadro*, the fifth in their preliminary practice series. The collection provides everything one needs to be able to do the complete *ngöndro* (preliminary practice) of Dorje Khadro, the recitation of the principal mantra 100,000 times coupled with extensive visualization and prayers. The book’s practice section includes the Dorje Khadro practice text, *Lama Tsongkhapa Guru Yoga* and lam-rim and dedication prayers. In addition, the book contains teachings that contribute to a student’s understanding of how to best engage in this practice. A precise commentary from Geshe Lama Konchog, an inspiring teaching from Lama Zopa Rinpoche based on a commentary written by Panchen Losang Chökyi Gyältsen, and a unique teaching from Lama Yeshe comprise the commentary section. The book’s advice section includes guidelines for how to use the materials to complete the preliminary practice, either as a full-time retreat or as a daily practice.

Dorje Khadro is one of the nine *ngöndros* of the Gelug tradition. FPMT Education Services is committed to making all of the preliminary practice texts available and has already published guides on four of these practices: prostrations to the Thirty-five Confession Buddhas, the mantra of Vajrasattva, the casting of tsa-tsas and water bowl offerings. The remaining practices of mandalas, refuge, Lama Tsongkhapa Guru Yoga (*migtsema*) and Samayavajra are in the works.

FPMT Education Services preliminary practice series guides can be found at the Foundation Store, shop.fpmt.org.

The Heart Sutra

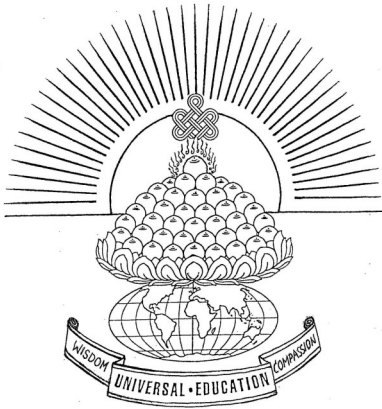
BASIC PROGRAM ONLINE



His Holiness the Dalai Lama at Vulture Peak, India, 2002

A new subject, *The Heart Sutra*, is available for the *Basic Program Online*. This module supports the development of a thorough understanding of the meaning of this precious text and the different levels of meditation on emptiness taught by it. In this commentary, offered for the five-year residential *Basic Program* at Nalanda Monastery, Geshe Sonam Ngodrub gives a detailed introduction to the modes of practice of the perfection of wisdom on the five Mahayana paths, as indicated by the *Heart Sutra* and its well-known mantra. The suggested amount of time needed to complete this subject is three months.

You may purchase this online module via the FPMT Foundation Store (shop.fpmt.org) or access it on the FPMT Online Learning Center as a Friend of FPMT (www.fpmt.org/friends) at the Dharma Supporter level or higher.



Foundation for Developing Compassion and Wisdom 'A New Kind of Universal Education'

By Foundation for Developing Compassion and Wisdom team

"The basic foundation of humanity is compassion and love. This is why, if even a few individuals simply try to create mental peace and happiness within themselves and act responsibly and kind-heartedly towards others, they will have a positive influence in their community." – His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Patron of FDCW

The Foundation for Developing Compassion and Wisdom (FDCW) is an international project of the FPMT, established in 2005, to help all beings lead a happier, more peaceful and meaningful life. It will achieve this through providing educational programs rooted in Buddhist philosophy and psychology yet suitable for people of all cultures and traditions. We call this *Universal Education for Compassion and Wisdom*.

'From Happiness to Happiness'

16 Guidelines Workshops in Spain, Switzerland and Israel

Marian O'Dwyer, FDCW training manager, has spent the past few months traveling through Europe and the Middle East, presenting Universal Education for Compassion and Wisdom to enthusiastic audiences of school teachers, psychologists, social workers, therapists and parents via a series of introductory talks and workshops on the *16 Guidelines for a Happy Life*, a simple, robust framework for reflecting on the ways we think, speak, act and find meaning in life.

The workshops took place in Spain, Switzerland and Israel at the invitation of local FPMT centers and study groups. In Madrid, Isabel Arocena, president of FPMT Spain, and Marisa Femenia, spiritual program coordinator of Nagarjuna C.E.T. Madrid, were so inspired that they wrote to Lama Zopa Rinpoche about how Marian's visit had taken the group "from happiness to happiness."

Similar enthusiasm was expressed in Granada, Valencia, Geneva and Tel Aviv, where groups of up to 50 participants explored the way in which their inner experience and understanding of the *16 Guidelines* could bring more meaning and happiness into their lives and relationships. For more stories and information on *16 Guidelines* workshops please visit www.16guidelines.org.



16 Guidelines workshop participants' one-word reflections on what they first felt upon hearing about Universal Education, presented as a word cloud

To learn more about the Foundation for Developing Compassion and Wisdom, visit www.compassionandwisdom.org.



Osel Hita works on Being Your True Nature, Institut Vajra Yogini, France, August 2011. Photo by Ven. Freeman Trebilcock.

Being Your True Nature

Osel Hita and Matteo Passigato Launch New Film Worldwide

On Lama Tsongkhapa Day, December 8, 2012, more than 25 FPMT centers took part in the worldwide launch of *Being Your True Nature*. The 20-minute film by Osel Hita and Matteo Passigato introduces Universal Education for Compassion and Wisdom, the programs inspired by Lama Yeshe's initiative to create a happier and more peaceful world. The majority of the documentary was shot on location at Institut Vajra Yogini in France, which in August 2011 hosted an international gathering organized by FDCW.

Lama Yeshe had a vision for "a new kind of Universal Education" that presents the profound wisdom of all religions in a way that transcends individual countries, philosophies and religions. Lama Yeshe's ideas for Universal Education contain both scientific and spiritual dimensions without compromising either and teach techniques to develop love and compassion in people of any faith or none. The film includes archive interview footage with

Lama Yeshe, new interviews with Lama Zopa Rinpoche and Osel Hita as well as with attendees at the 2011 international gathering and FDCW staff, and explains how Lama Yeshe's vision is unfolding.

FPMT students were invited to organize screening events that included not only the film itself but also included Universal Education activities such as a Loving Kindness Peaceful Youth meditation and a supplemental screening of the original interview about Universal Education with Lama Yeshe. The events also included discussions about the ideas presented in the movie, such as "how do you think understanding your true nature and being satisfied with yourself enables you to live in the moment and help other people?"

If you would like to watch the film and/or organize a screening, we invite you to visit the website www.beingyourtruenature.org where you will find a link to the movie, information about the directors and producers, additional interviews with some of the cast, and a ready-made screening pack. ♦

The Importance of Universal Education for Compassion and Wisdom

By Osel Hita

Being Your True Nature, a film by Osel Hita and Matteo Passigato, explores Universal Education for Compassion and Wisdom, Lama Yeshe's vision for creating a happier and more peaceful world [see page 43]. The film, which was commissioned by Foundation for Developing Compassion and Wisdom (FDCW), premiered on Lama Tsongkhapa Day, December 8, 2012, with one of its main screenings taking place at Kopan Monastery in Nepal. Osel Hita shared with Mandala his thoughts about Universal Education, making the film and his role with FPMT.



Osel Hita at Amitabha Buddhist Centre, Singapore, November 2012. Photo courtesy of Amitabha Buddhist Centre.

Since the very beginning, Universal Education was one of Lama Yeshe's priorities because, as His Holiness the Dalai Lama says, education is our future. From my point of view, it's very important and one of the priorities I see for FPMT. So when Alison Murdoch [director of FDCW and FPMT board member] asked me if I was interested in doing a documentary on Universal Education for Compassion and Wisdom, I thought it was a wonderful idea.

The film is the first documentary I have made public. I have others, but they have been underground. So this is the first documentary I've done where I can show something. I'm very excited and happy about it.

One of the reasons why I'm working with FDCW is because I think it's got great potential to help people and it offers something very practical – we can see the results in a few years. It's not just theory. For me, something very important is to be able to give non-Buddhists practical techniques that actually take effect in two, three or four years. That is what non-Buddhist people are looking for. That is what Universal Education is able to give to people, an approach that is practical and clear.

Not only that, Universal Education is also for children, who are so ready to absorb whatever comes to them like a sponge. We can give children tools to help them be more conscious, empathetic and aware of their surroundings, their actions, other people and cause and result. If you teach children these things, later in their lives when difficulties come up, these tools will be there automatically. For me, that's so important to give to humanity.

Universal Education offers things that today's society doesn't teach us otherwise. We are only taught to be the best – to get the best job, the most money, the most beautiful girl, the best car, the best house. Then you have your kids, which can be a great opportunity to grow and be beneficial, but kids grow up. And then what happens? Many people reach middle age and say, "Oh, no! I haven't done what I really wanted to do. I haven't accomplished anything for myself that is truly meaningful." Why? Because the education system in our society made us believe that things like being the best should be our priority.

The purpose of our lives is actually very simple. It's to help other people. And through that, we learn. As we learn, we grow and become wiser. There is a certain point when we start interiorizing these lessons. When we interiorize, it's very similar to Buddhism. But all that can happen outside of the religion. And that's where I feel my job is.

I'm working parallel to FPMT right now because I feel that I'm in the process of becoming a Buddhist. I'm very interested in Buddhism, but I'm still learning about

it. Because I'm still learning, I don't see myself as a Buddhist. To be Buddhist, you have to have a certain lifestyle, you have to have certain information on what real Buddhism is and you have to practice, which isn't just meditation and prayers. Practice is how you live everyday and how you relate to other people. For me, being a Buddhist is not something that just happens because you become a monk or because you do some mantras or take an initiation. Being a Buddhist is an actual lifestyle and attitude based on your own moral code to treat others how you want others to treat you. I'm very clear about that, because my lifestyle is still not completely Buddhist-like. But I try and slowly, slowly, step by step.

Because of where I am at, I think that it's very important from my side to create a way for people, especially those not interested in religion, to get an introduction to these ideas about what the real purpose of our lives is and to spark an interest in the wisdom passed down from the experiences of generations of our ancestors. So if I can help people with an introduction to Dharma in order for them to come to know that it is a very practical path, then my job is done.

Osel Hita serves on the FPMT board of directors and was recognized as the incarnation of FPMT founder Lama Yeshe.

Learn more about the film at www.beingyourtruenature.org.

A Warm Homecoming for Khen Rinpoche Geshe Chonyi

By Ngawang Sanggye, Kopan Khamtsen secretary



Khen Rinpoche Geshe Chonyi speaking with the monks of Kopan Khamtsen at Sera Je Monastery, Bylakuppe, India, June 2012. Photo courtesy of Kopan Khamtsen.

In June 2012, monks from Kopan Khamtsen at Sera Je Monastery had the very happy privilege of welcoming Khen Rinpoche Geshe Chonyi, the current abbot of Kopan Monastery in Nepal, to their residence in South India. It was a very special moment for the community to welcome its most senior alumnus. Geshe Chonyi was part of the first group of monks that came from Kopan to Sera Je to pursue rigorous studies in

Buddhist philosophy. He went on to earn his Geshe Lharampa degree, the highest possible Geshe degree, from Sera Je.

This was Khen Rinpoche's first visit to the khamtsen [monastic house] after taking over as abbot of Kopan. He was invited to give advice and guidance. During his talk, Khen Rinpoche very fondly remembered his stay at the khamtsen when he was studying here. He mentioned that during his stay

YOUR COMMUNITY

at Sera, facilities were far more basic and one had to make quite a few adjustments and compromises with regard to accommodation, food and healthcare. In particular, he recollected that due to poor nutrition, monks would fall ill very often. On occasions when one had to get an injection at the Sera Je Healthcare Clinic, since it was poorly funded and poorly equipped, injection needles would be reused. On several occasions the needle would become bent and

Treatises (*Abhisamayalamkara*, *Madhyamakavatara*, *Vinaya*, *Abhidharma* and *Pramanavartika*). He noted that study of these scriptures, which is the focus of the geshe program curriculum at Sera Je, is absolutely critical for the spiritual development of all the monks. It also equips the monks better to fulfill the expectations that His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Lama Zopa Rinpoche have for us. In particular, he mentioned, it is of great value to

He noted that if one were to develop some control over one's mind and weaken one's afflictions, it would be a far greater accomplishment than building thousands of stupas around the world.

would inevitably lead to bleeding. Khen Rinpoche mentioned that they learned to ignore such discomforts and to persist with focus on the study of philosophy. He urged all the Kopan monks to do the same.

He emphasized that it is necessary for all the Kopan monks to ignore temporary distractions and persevere in their studies and in training their minds. He noted that if one were to develop some control over one's mind and weaken one's afflictions, it would be a far greater accomplishment than building thousands of stupas around the world. Khen Rinpoche also emphasized the need for all the Kopan monks to study extensively the Five Great

realize Lama Zopa Rinpoche's vision to preserve the essence of the Mahayana tradition through the medium of FPMT.

After Khen Rinpoche's inspiring talk, the chief mentor of Kopan Khamtsen thanked him for the invaluable guidance. He also reiterated our commitment to put into practice Khen Rinpoche's advice and our assurance that the entire community was forever at his service to implement his vision for Kopan Monastery's future.

You can find the Kopan Khamtsen on Facebook: www.facebook.com/kopanhstl.serajey.

Road to Kopan An Irresistible Pull

By Marcel Bertels

As a child, I had an enormous attraction to and curiosity about Christianity, but as there was nothing and no one to nurture this curiosity, even in the Roman Catholic system of which I was part, it was gone by the time I was eight or nine years old. After that, I basically had no more space for anything to do with religion.

As I went through my high school years in Amsterdam, there were a lot of questions in my mind about my future. I definitely wanted to do something meaningful in life. Thinking about it, I figured that probably the best way to make my life meaningful would be to focus on development economics in poorer countries, so I started as a student of economics at the University of Amsterdam.

There were other questions in my mind about life in general, which were probably more of a subconscious nature. I saw some of my friends marrying and others in long-term committed relationships. Somehow, being married, raising a family and developing a career did not appeal to me much, but there didn't seem to be any viable or logical alternative; I remember it was quite unsettling.

I needed more time to think, so I developed a plan to study until I earned my bachelor's degree and then make a trip around the world. I was a part-time barkeeper during my studies and put aside the princely sum of about \$800 for my trip. In the early 1970s, life was cheap once you got out of Western Europe, and from there on my budget was about one dollar a day. It was an incredible adventure as I was making my way East, spending time, for example, in pre-civil war Lebanon and a few weeks in Baghdad and Basra in the early years of Saddam Hussein's reign. After traveling through Afghanistan, Pakistan and India, the friends I was traveling with decided to go to Sri Lanka, but I opted for Nepal. Travelers reported "good curd, cheese and hashish," things not generally available in India, so I journeyed to Nepal in September 1972.

In Kathmandu, I met up with Nicole Couture (now, Nicole Kedge). I had heard about Nicole before and I had missed her by just a few hours in Greece, but I met her ex-husband Guy. We started hanging in Kathmandu together and did a yoga course. I stayed in a lodge called

“Tiny Lodge,” sleeping on a mat for one rupee per night. Kathmandu was a cheap, magical and wonderful place. Nicole had heard about the Kopan course and had signed up. I decided to go and have a look and walked up to Kopan for the first time and signed up as well. I owe a great deal to Nicole for getting me up there.

I remember walking up to Kopan on my way to the course. The night before, I had met up with old traveling friends near Swayambhunath and we had splurged on hashish and tsampa porridge. I had eaten far too much and I had to stop four or five times on my way to Kopan Hill because of violent diarrhea. A fitting sign of the indefinite nature of samsaric pleasures, if any!

I attended the famous third Kopan course and sat next to Paula de Wijs [see “Where I Needed to Be” in *Mandala* October-December 2012]. Many of the participants became my life-long Dharma friends and colleagues. Lama Zopa Rinpoche was a huge shock to my system. I had never seen or met anyone who was so far beyond a normal human being.

I took to the Dharma truths like a duck to water. I was hugely relieved to find out there was a worthy alternative to life other than marriage and career. Within days, my mind was set and I knew in my heart Dharma had an answer for all my unconscious doubts and questions. I felt not the slightest doubt that Dharma provided all the answers I needed as well as gave a clear purpose for my life.

Shortly after, I had the single greatest fortune of my life: meeting the incomparably kind Lama Yeshe. The road to Kopan for me opened up all the immense potential and possibilities I could have ever wished for. Looking back, even from birth there had been this irresistible pull towards this road to Kopan.



Lama Yeshe and Marcel Bertels at Kopan Monastery, Nepal, 1974. Photo courtesy of Lama Yeshe Wisdom Archive.

This is a condensed version of Marcel’s story. You can read a longer version at mandalamagazine.org.

Among the first wave of FPMT monks and nuns, Marcel Bertels was ordained in 1974 and remained a monk for 30 years. In 1982 when Lama Yeshe formed the original FPMT board, he became a member and served 15 years. He was in charge of Maitreya Project’s affairs in India for 8 years. Marcel founded a business in Kathmandu, Nepal, in 1975 to support the Sangha. He is still responsible for this business and lives in Kathmandu.

Featured Center

Integrating Dharma into Life, Life into Dharma: Langri Tangpa Centre's 30th Anniversary

By Miffi Maxmillion



From left: Inta McKimm in the first gompā, 1982. The room only seated 12; Langri Tangpa Centre today. Photos courtesy of Miffi Maxmillion.

1982 – 1997

A One-woman Operation

Inta McKimm, a Latvian refugee from the Second World War, started Langri Tangpa Centre (LTC, then known as Chenrezig City Centre) in Newmarket, an inner suburb of Brisbane, in the early 1980s. Inta first met Lama Zopa Rinpoche at the famous Diamond Valley course in Queensland in 1972. She ran the center from her lounge, moving her own room to the sleep-out, and single-handedly financed the center with her meager pension. She led weekly classes, weekend workshops and hosted many high lamas, as well as managing to invest in rare art books for the library. Inta's brightly dyed hair, the elegant clothes she made herself and her wild jewelry attracted a diverse group of students. Her friendliness and non-judgmental attitude meant that many outsiders found a home on the Buddhist path.

1997 – 2007

From Lounge Room to the Entire House

When Inta became sick with lung cancer, many of her friends were deeply shocked – they had assumed she was at least 20 years younger than her actual age of 71. Just as she was becoming seriously ill, Inta traveled to His Holiness the Dalai Lama's 1996 teachings in Sydney, where he personally made sure she was in a prominent position for a group photo. The center had by this time been given a new name by Lama Zopa Rinpoche: Langri Tangpa Centre, after the great geshe famous for his tong-len practice of the *Eight Verses of Thought Transformation*. Inta had developed a unique tong-len retreat practice, incorporating Jungian psychology and waking dreaming to create a holistic, life-changing experience.

Inta's death was a good death; it was inspiring [see *Mandala* September-October 1997]. Rinpoche had said to her "how wonderful and how terrible to hear about your illness." Terrible, because one is never finished or ready to die, and wonderful to be given a window to set things in order and say goodbye to her many devastated students. As her daughter, I figured that she had brought me into this life, so it was my job to help her out of hers. She was genuinely curious about the experience, and her complete devotion to Rinpoche assuaged any fear she may have had. Her years of contemplative practice served her well, even when the brain tumors changed the surface of her behavior. Inta proved

you could have a love of movies and rock music, be a Western woman having met the lamas at the relatively late age of 45, and still have a good death free of fear. And it gave all of us a deep sense of awe and comfort – *living* proof that this can be possible for all of us.

Upon Inta's death in 1997, I left my successful costume and couture business in Melbourne with a three-month plan to sort things out. The center went from running finances out of a biscuit tin, to becoming incorporated with a fully fledged committee. We watched comedy shows after our meetings, because a committee that laughs together, stays together. Eddie Peet and myself began leading the program. Classes doubled in size, then doubled again, and gradually we began to run out of space. Meditators had to angle-park their knees to fit into the gompa, and we had closed-circuit TV into the lounge and kitchen when Geshe Tashi Tsering (LTC's main teacher from 1990 to 2009) came to give teachings.

2007 – 2012

The Bigger, Better LTC!

After four intensive years of searching (and a good deal of “center envy” as we heard of the miraculous property acquisitions of other centers), we finally found a suitable new premises at Camp Hill, a residential suburb of Brisbane. But we had only A\$20,000 in the bank and were bidding for a million-dollar property! People said we shouldn't waste our energy so as not to be disappointed. Nevertheless, we developed a one-inch thick business plan and followed Rinpoche's instructions, reciting thousands of sutras to create mountains of merit. Then, on the strength of the business plan and the sincerity of our vision, one of our members donated A\$600,000. We convinced the bank to give us a loan (squeezing in just a couple of months before the great financial crisis dried up all credit worldwide) and signed the papers during the 2007 visit of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. The new building was well and truly blessed when we hosted the holy relics from the Great Stupa of Universal Compassion within our first six months. From that exhibition grew our core group of volunteers, students and class leaders. The program now has evening classes five to six times a week, as well as a daytime curriculum.



Langri Tangpa Centre committee: (from left) spiritual program coordinator Miffi Maxmillion, Phil Rowe, Karen Whelan, Ven. Losang Lhagsam, treasurer Heath Goldfinch, director Jaimee Treloar and Ruth Guthrie, Camp Hill gompa, 2011. Photo courtesy of Miffi Maxmillion.

2012 and Beyond ...

I've been at LTC over 15 years now (which was as long as my mother served), my “three-month plan” morphed into becoming a full-time volunteer. I never dreamed I'd be carrying on my mother's vision, but it just seemed impossible to let her and Rinpoche's vision founder after all their effort. Our current director, Jaimee Treloar, was the youngest director in the FPMT when she was appointed. In fact, she's the same age as the center! We have just received a new logo from Lama Zopa Rinpoche and have installed a Tibetan/Australian altar ready for life-size statues. Our center is a home for the students, a safe haven and an oasis. (But it's also noisy and boisterous sometimes!)

The current program is best summed up by our recent “Great Prostrate-athon,” combining merit-raising, fundraising and community spirit. Aussies love a bit of competition, so why not make it beneficial for all sentient beings without exception and practical in the very crucial matter of servicing our mortgage? The prostrators and sutra reciting teams raised over A\$13,000 in sponsorships (working out to a hefty dollar per prostration). This success perhaps best sums up our aim to perfectly integrate Dharma into life, life into Dharma. So, here's to a continuing, stable and extensive vision for decades to come! ♦

You can find Langri Tangpa Centre online at www.langritangpa.org.au.

Find out more about **Your Community** online: Rejoice for the second round of 108 nyung-näs at Institut Vajra Yogini in France. Visit mandalamagazine.org.

Obituaries

Lama Zopa Rinpoche requests that “students who read *Mandala* pray that the students whose obituaries follow find a perfect human body, meet a Mahayana guru and become enlightened quickly, or be born in a pure land where the teachings exist and they can become enlightened.” While reading these obituaries, we can also reflect upon our own death and rebirth, prompting us to live our lives in the most meaningful way.

Advice and practices for death and dying from Lama Zopa Rinpoche are available in the Foundation Store (shop.fpmt.org).

Jason Chan Ling Heng, 65, died in Singapore, August 20, 2012, of a blood disorder

By Doris Ang



Jason was warm and caring, always putting others’ welfare before his own. He had done so much in this life through his contributions and invaluable service to the needy community and many remembered him as a humble, kind and patient man. We know he will continue to touch the lives and hearts of many wherever he may be.

He served as president of Singapore Buddhist Youth Mission and benefited many people through organizing Dharma talks as well as 12 years of meditation talks by Dr. K. K. Tan. When he was in Melbourne, he was most happy bringing overseas friends to visit the Great Stupa of Universal Compassion, set up by our teacher Lama Zopa Rinpoche in Bendigo.

On his last day alive, he asked for all his siblings and our close relatives to come over. He asked for 10 small cups filled with water. The first he offered to me, saying that this cup of water represented tea. He apologized to me that he was not able to take care of me anymore. He asked for for-

giveness and reminded me to take care of myself. He bade me farewell. He continued to do this to everyone, asking for forgiveness for any misgivings and bidding them farewell. What was most painful to see was the amount of effort he had to put in to drink that small cup of water as he was so breathless and had to take off his oxygen mask to drink. I am so proud of him that until the last moment, he still displayed his graciousness. When it was my son’s turn, my son asked Jason if Mother Chenrezig was there to receive him. He nodded his head, said “Yes,” and passed away.

We wish him a good rebirth and the attainment of the bliss of nirvana at the earliest opportunity.

Jason, may you always be by the side of your Mother Chenrezig, receiving teachings from her. May the Triple Gem always bless, guide and protect you. May you continue to learn and practice the Dharma until you attain nirvana.

Maurizio Cacciatore, 55, died in Turin, Italy, September 2, 2012

By Ven. Joan Nicell

Maurizio Cacciatore joined the first *Masters Program* at Istituto Lama Tzong Khapa for the study of Madhyamaka (Middle Way) in January 2000. At the age of 42, he had decided to leave behind a successful career that had included executive positions with important Italian companies including Mondadori, Giorgio Armani and Tecnologica. However, as he himself recounts in an article that appeared in *Mandala* in late 2001:

“I can’t say that I heroically decided to renounce mundane happiness in order to dedicate my life to Dharma. In fact, the

quantity of mundane happiness that I was enjoying was small; though I had high status and beautiful girlfriends (the two most important things, it seems), I was perpetually nervous, restless, worried, dissatisfied, angry and sometimes very sad.

“As my career was continuously advancing, my level of intolerance and dissatisfaction was proportionally increasing. Dealing with me was becoming more and more difficult, especially for my shareholders and the people for whom I felt responsible.”

Maurizio later described the year and a half that he spent studying Madhyamaka



as the happiest of his life. At the institute he had met a group of people who, like himself, were highly motivated to study and practice the Dharma. He thoroughly enjoyed the challenging classes, the meal-time debates, and the exposure to people with different points of view.

After finishing his studies, Maurizio helped Istituto Lama Tzong Khapa organize several days of teachings with His Holiness the Dalai Lama in November 2001. Shortly afterward, Lama Zopa Rinpoche asked him to take on the position of director of the

institute. Maurizio accepted this position, which he held for about a year, convinced of the fact that the FPMT is making an extremely important contribution to this world. Out of a deep feeling of gratitude for all that he himself had received from the institute, he continued to work for it until the end of his life. In particular, he gave his full support to the ongoing development of the Istituto Lama Tzong Khapa's study programs, also generously sponsoring students, monks and nuns who were in financial need, making it possible for them to continue their studies.

Maurizio also collaborated with Liberation Prison Project, corresponding regularly with several prisoners. Although his life had been quite different from theirs, he felt a deep affinity with their suffering and enjoyed sharing his understanding of the Dharma with them.

Maurizio is much missed by his family, friends and the community of Istituto Lama Tzong Khapa. May he, in all his future lives, always meet the Dharma and his teachers, practice the path, and quickly attain enlightenment for the benefit of all.

Cyndi Yee Yoke Fen, 40, died in Singapore, September 18, 2012, of cerebral venous thrombosis

By Ven. Tenzin Tsultrim

Cyndi Yee, the beloved wife of Fred Cheong of Amitabha Buddhist Centre (ABC), seemed fit and healthy, and no one expected her to leave so suddenly. Following a very severe migraine attack that lasted several days, Cyndi suffered a massive stroke on September 13. Fred was by her side. She was rushed to the emergency room and immediately placed in intensive care. A huge blood clot had formed in her brain that caused bleeding into the surrounding tissues. The very next day, heavily sedated, a four-hour procedure was carried out to stop the life-threatening hemorrhage. Although the doctor declared the procedure a success,

Cyndi's condition deteriorated. By early the next morning, Saturday, her brain had shut down. Cyndi never regained consciousness.

Cyndi's husband, Fred Cheong, is Amitabha Buddhist Centre's vice-president. He leads ABC's Animal Liberation project, which has liberated over 150 million lives in the last decade. Fred and Cyndi were



Photo by Tan Seow Kheng

married for 20 years. Through Fred, Cyndi met the Dharma. They joined Amitabha Buddhist Centre 18 years ago and, from then on, were devoted to serving Lama Zopa Rinpoche.

News about Cyndi's critical condition spread quickly, bringing a constant stream of visitors to the hospital. Fred had contacted Lama Zopa Rinpoche in the United States, and Rinpoche was praying for Cyndi. Rinpoche had also advised certain prayers, including the *Diamond Cutter Sutra*, to be recited. The Dharma friends who kept up a twenty-four hour vigil for Cyndi that weekend recited all the prayers that Rinpoche advised. Many were hopeful that Cyndi would pull through. Rinpoche said that reciting the prayers was to either help Cyndi recover fully or help her be reborn in a pure land.

When medical tests showed that Cyndi would never recover, Fred turned to Rinpoche for a final decision. From Rinpoche's divination, it came out excellent to release Cyndi from life support on Monday night at 10 P.M. As the support systems were switched off, Rinpoche himself performed the *powa* ritual to transfer her consciousness to a pure land.

That Monday from 7:30 P.M., prayers were also recited in Kopan Nunnery and at Sera Je Monastery. At ABC, a three-and-a-half hour long extensive Medicine Buddha puja was held, attended by 200 people. Khen Rinpoche Geshe Chonyi, family and close friends were by Cyndi's bedside doing prayers. Borne by a powerful chorus of prayers from her gurus, family and friends, Cyndi's consciousness dissolved away from this life.

Cyndi was an active volunteer at ABC. With characteristic efficiency, she organized the Vesak Day puja sponsorship for many years, set up the center's retail store and coordinated long life pujas for our gurus. Fun-loving and lively, she helped put together birthday and anniversary parties for Khen Rinpoche, ABC's resident teacher.

Besides giving years of service to ABC, Cyndi worked earnestly at her Dharma practice. She quit a successful career at the age of 35. She graduated from the *Basic Program* in 2010 and completed an impressive number of practices: 200,000 prostrations, 150,000 mandala offerings, 100,000 Vajrasattva mantras, 100,000 refuge mantras, 100,000 Mig-tsemas, 400,000 Samayavajra mantras and several tantric retreats.

Some days before she passed away, she told a friend that the two most important things in life were living in morality and practicing the three principles of the path.

Fred displayed great strength and spiritual courage throughout the ordeal, focusing on what was best for Cyndi. He said: "I am really proud of what Cyndi achieved in this life. From the age of 19, from someone who didn't know Dharma, to becoming someone who died a Dharma practitioner. She inspired me as much as I inspired her." ♦

You can find two photo montages of Cyndi Yee's life and death made by the community members of Amitabha Buddhist Centre by searching for her name on YouTube.

Lama Zopa Rinpoche News



Lama Zopa Rinpoche at Kurukulla Center, Medford, Massachusetts, U.S., October 2012. Photo by Kadri Kurgun.

FPMT spiritual director Lama Zopa Rinpoche had a busy autumn in the United States and then India. Before leaving California, he offered a well-attended Vajrasattva initiation, organized by Vajrapani Institute, in Boulder Creek on September 30, 2012, and visited Tse Chen Ling in San Francisco on October 10. Rinpoche was at Kurukulla Center in Medford, Massachusetts, on October 16-17 in conjunction with His Holiness the Dalai Lama's visit (see page 24). While in the Boston area, Rinpoche also spent time at Lama Yeshe Wisdom Archive and caught up with Wisdom Publications. From there, Rinpoche visited his teacher Geshe Lhundub Sopa at Deer Park Buddhist Center in Oregon, Wisconsin, and hand-delivered to Geshe Sopa the just-printed copy of Geshe-la's new autobiography *Like a Waking Dream*, published by Wisdom (see page 29).

Rinpoche arrived in South India in late October, where he gave the Most Secret Hayagriva oral transmission at Drati Khangsten at Sera Je Monastery (see page 28). While staying at Sera Je, Rinpoche visited with many people, including the young Ribur Rinpoche tulku, the Kopan monks studying at Sera Je, students from Choe Khor Sum Ling Study Group in Bangalore and Sera Je kitchen staff, whose work is supported by the Sera Je Food Fund.

Rinpoche is in Nepal in December. On December 19, Rinpoche gives a Vajrasattva initiation at Kopan Monastery. Later in December, Rinpoche gives a Great Chenrezig initiation to the Tamang community at Boudhanath Stupa in Kathmandu. On December 29, a long life puja for Lama Zopa Rinpoche will be offered on behalf of FPMT.

For more information on Rinpoche's schedule visit www.fpmt.org/teachers/zopa/schedule.html. You can find news updates on Lama Zopa Rinpoche at www.fpmt.org/enews and at mandalamagazine.org/posts.

Maitreya Project

After working 15 years for the project, Peter Kedge is passing the directorship of the Maitreya Project on to Nita Ing. Peter Kedge is a long-time student of Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa Rinpoche and serves on the board of FPMT. He has seen the project through many difficult obstacles requiring hard work, sacrifice and patience. Nita Ing is a successful business woman who has much experience with large construction projects both in Taiwan and India. She will focus her energy on building the Maitreya statue in Bodhgaya.

In November 2012, Lama Zopa Rinpoche explained in a letter the change of course for the project: "[The] Maitreya statue will now be built in Bodhgaya, but due to restrictions there, the statue won't be as tall as originally planned (500 feet, or, 152 meters). Now it is going to be 150 feet (46 meters) in height. For the past nine years we have worked hard with the Uttar Pradesh state government to locate the project in Kushinagar, but because of very difficult issues regarding land acquisition, with the approval of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, we have now decided to build the Maitreya statue in Bodhgaya."

You can read the complete letter from Lama Zopa Rinpoche as well as letters from Peter Kedge and Nita Ing on the Maitreya Project website, www.maitreya-project.org.

Tashi Delek from Lotsawa Rinchen Zangpo Translator Programme!

From Claire Yeshe Barde



LRZTP6 staff: (from left) Claire Yeshe Barde, director; Sally Dudgeon, assistant director; Gen Sherab Dhargye-la main teacher; and Teresa Bianca, interpretation teacher, Dharamsala, India, October 2012

The sixth Lotsawa Rinchen Zangpo Translator Programme (LRZTP) launched October 6, 2012, in Dharamsala, India, with a party attended by all the teachers, students, conversation partners and staff. It was a great opportunity to get to know each other and to set the objective and motivation for the program. After being introduced to the teachers and staff, we had momos in the autumn sun. Everyone was very excited and happy – and very impatient to get started!



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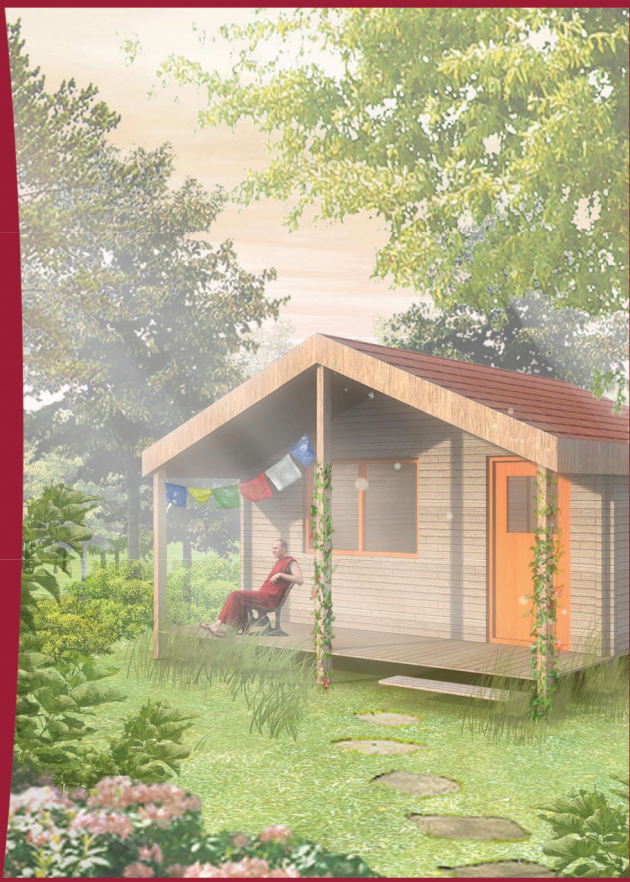
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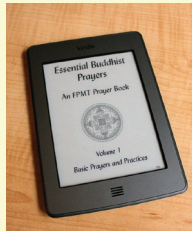
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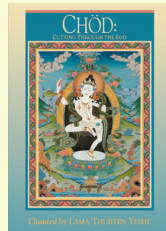
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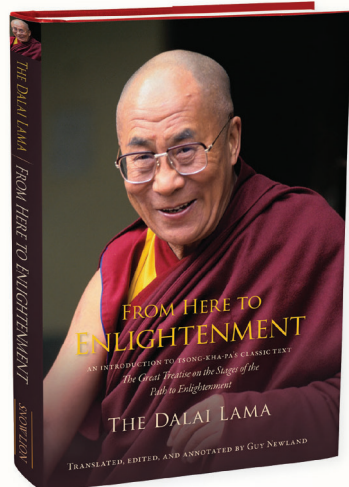


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FPMT NEWS AROUND THE WORLD

Classes started on October 8 with our teacher Gen Sherab Dhargye-la and 15 students, with a few students wishing to join in the second year. They all seem very enthusiastic and motivated.

Our aim is to provide students of LRZTP6 with an immersive learning experience of the Tibetan culture and language. LRZTP is not only a language course, but a real interpretation course and our students graduate with concrete skills for their professional careers.

Our wish is to contribute in this way to the preservation of the Mahayana tradition through high-quality training of Dharma interpreters from Tibetan into many languages, and thus spreading the teachings of Lord Buddha, the source of happiness, all over the world!

lrztp.blogspot.com

**Representatives of Four Malaysian FPMT
 Centers Meet His Holiness the Dalai Lama**

From Selina Foong, center director of Rinchen Jangsem Ling



Representatives of Malaysia’s FPMT centers (Ven. Sonam, Adam Martin, Selina Foong, Goh Pik Pin and Lim Kim Choon) with His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Dharamsala, India, August 2012

On August 31, 2012, representatives of all four Malaysian FPMT centers (Losang Dragpa Centre, Kasih Hospice Care, Chokyi Gyaltzen Center and Rinchen Jangsem Retreat Centre) met with His Holiness the Dalai Lama at his residence in Dharamsala, India, at an event organized by the Vajrayana Buddhist Council of Malaysia (VBCM).

His Holiness answered two questions put forth by VBCM. Later, His Holiness was videotaped responding to questions about positive and negative states of mind for the World Buddhist Conference held on November 3-4 in Kuala Lumpur. The answers were detailed yet concise, and what had originally been stipulated as a 30-minute audience stretched into a long and amazing teaching lasting almost one-and-a-half hours!

At the end of the audience, Ven. Sonam represented the four Malaysian FPMT centers to present His Holiness with a set of robes especially ordered from His Holiness’ personal tailor, a Dharma seat cover, double-dorje brocade and a Dharma wheel.

This was His Holiness’ first direct introduction to Malaysian FPMT centers, making it a most meaningful occasion.

Lama Zopa Rinpoche Offers Statue of Ascetic Buddha to Root Institute

From Ven. Trisha Labdron, center director

In January 2012, Lama Zopa Rinpoche offered Root Institute in Bodhgaya, India, a wooden carving of the Buddha while performing austerities before his enlightenment. Rinpoche wanted it “in the garden where everyone can see it” with these specific words on a plaque below: “No one achieved enlightenment without hardships. This is Buddha’s message and why Buddha took this aspect, living for six years [an] ascetic life.”

When Rinpoche offered the statue, he commented that “I bought the statue yesterday to put at the center for people to know that achieving enlightenment is not by comfort or by luxury, but by sacrifice – sacrificing the life for sentient beings – with effort and bearing hardship.”

www.rootinstitute.com



Ascetic Buddha statue at Root Institute

Mahamudra Centre Completes Emergency Stupa Repair and Other Projects

From Ven. Nangsel McCombie, center director

High on Rinpoche’s list of requests for our center was the addition of flower garlands to our stupa with lights at the center of the flowers. We decided to use computer technology to create the mold and have the garlands cast in brass and polished by a foundry in Auckland.

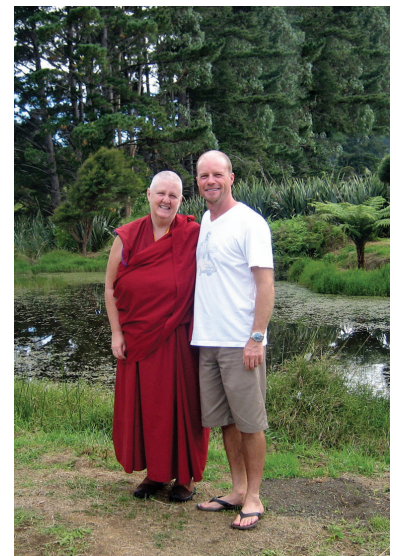
While investigating how to safely attach each of the 80-kilogram [176-pound] garlands to the stupa, Rob Bloor, holy object coordinator, discovered water had seeped into and filled the central chamber. The life tree had to be removed, the central chamber drained, the life tree was repaired and the mantras repainted by Geshe Jamyang. Further seepage was discovered, but work stopped in May when Rob needed to leave.

Ven. Yarphel [John Jackson], who was doing retreat at the center, came to see me. “You can’t leave the stupa like that,” he said. On hearing about the difficulties, he quietly said, “I’m going to fix it!” He finished retreat and took on the huge job of emptying, waterproofing, refilling, repairing and decorating the stupa and overseeing the casting, polishing and installation of the flower garlands. It was a huge undertaking to try and complete in time for a retreat less than 16 weeks away. Every center should have a Ven. Yarphel!

Many other people helped including Murray Wright, who had to use a respirator to clean out the moldy chambers of the stupa; Dorje Chang Institute, which provided new tsa-tsas; community members who donated funds for new texts and mantras; Ani Fran from Kopan Monastery, who organized the printing and shipping of the texts; and Geshe Wangchen, who blessed everything enabling the stupa to then be filled.

Other projects have also been completed including our newly landscaped pond by volunteer Nick Richards; and a new altar made possible by Bette McCombie and constructed out of New Zealand Heart Rimu by Nigel Abraham; and our renovated Stupa Room with repaired leaks, a beautiful new door and sandblasted glass panels of the eight auspicious symbols.

www.mahamudra.org.nz



From left: The renovated stupa features flower garlands with electric lights; Ven. Nangsel and Nick Richards. Photos courtesy of Mahamudra Centre.

Milarepa Center's New Altar From Ven. Amy Miller, center director

Milarepa Center in Barnet, Vermont, U.S., commissioned a new altar to house a set of the precious Kangyur offered in 2011 by Dagri Rinpoche. The altar was designed by Shelley Hagan and constructed by Damcho Tsering Lama, Jangchup Jinpa and Emanuel and painted by Jampel Lama. It also contains 30 holy relics in mirrored cases, making the room appear much larger. It is a fantastic blessing for our entire community!

www.milarepacenter.org



Milarepa Center's new altar, November 2012. Photo by Cristian Cowan.



Lama Yeshe, Berkeley, California, 1974. Photo donated by Judy Weitzner; courtesy of Lama Yeshe Wisdom Archive.

The *Big Love* Blog

Over the years, *Mandala* has published many excerpts from *Big Love*, the forthcoming authorized biography of Lama Yeshe. After many years of writing, researching and editing, Lama Yeshe Wisdom Archive plans to publish the completed biography in 2013. Adele Hulse started writing *Big Love* nearly 20 years ago. She collected hundreds of interviews from Lama Yeshe's students, friends and colleagues around the world. "All in all, we expect to produce two 600-page hardcover volumes in a slipcase with color and black and white photos all the way through," the Archive reports on its website.

In September 2012, the Archive created a *Big Love* blog and has been regularly posting new excerpts to it. Recent posts include stories about Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa Rinpoche's first Western student, Zina Rachevesky; the beginning of Kopan Monastery; and trekking up to Lawudo, where Rinpoche's previous incarnation had meditated. ♦

Read the blog at biglovelamayeshe.wordpress.com.

To learn more about the publishing of *Big Love* and offer support, visit www.lamayeshe.com.

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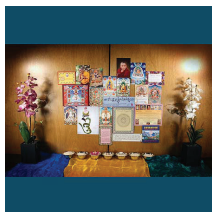
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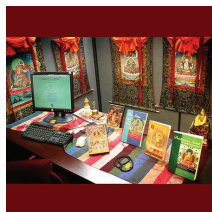
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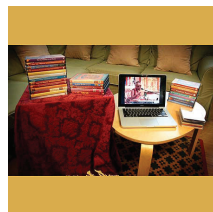
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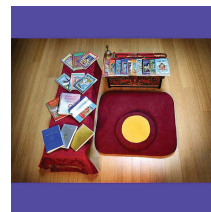
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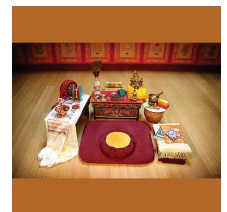
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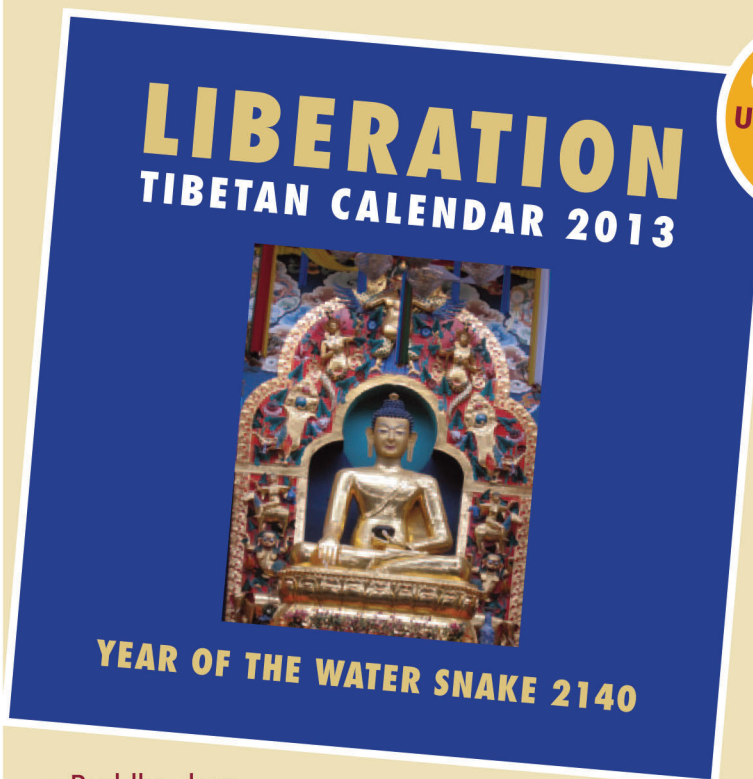
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