

Chokling Tersar Times

SPRING 2007 - ISSUE # 10

Rangjung Yeshe Gomde Programs 2007

DZIGAR KONGTRUL RINPOCHE

June 4-13, 2007

Shedra: The wisdom chapter of Shantideva's classic text on compassion, *The Way of the Bodhisattva*.

GHÖKYI NYIMA RINPOCHE

July 20-22, 2007

Bodhisattva Training: Transforming Your Relationship to the World. Heart advice for compassionate action in the world. Open to all students.

GHÖKYI NYIMA RINPOCHE

July 22-29, 2007

Dzogchen Intensive: The Heart of the Matter: Pith instructions for Madhyamika, Mahamudra and Dzogchen. Permission required to attend. Inquire through the Gomde office.



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WHAT IS CTF?

The Chokling Tersar Foundation is a nonprofit religious organization with 501c3 status from the IRS. Its main objective is to establish, organize and maintain a place for the practice, study and preservation of the Chokling Tersar.

The primary aims of our organization include:

- ✿ To invite teachers of this tradition;
- ✿ To build a temple for use of the sangha as well as to house sacred images, relics and scriptures;
- ✿ To create retreat facilities for groups and individuals;
- ✿ To provide English and Tibetan texts and media connected to this tradition;
- ✿ To provide financial aid to support and maintain monks and nuns in monasteries and nunneries in Tibet, India and Nepal;
- ✿ To establish traditional Tibetan Buddhist healing centers in both the East and West.

CTF owns the Rangjung Yeshe Gomde retreat center, where many of the above activities are focused. However, as an umbrella organization, CTF supports many other pursuits, including archiving projects, Rangjung Yeshe Publications & Translations, Yangdzom Healing Hands, and aid to over a dozen monasteries and nunneries in Tibet, Nepal and India.

The spiritual head of CTF is Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche. Other spiritual representatives include Tsikey Chokling Rinpoche and Phakchok Rinpoche. The Board of Directors is composed of Francis (Paco) Dreher (executive director), Erik Pema Kunsang, Graham Sunstein, Marcia Binder Schmidt and Hilda Goldman.

The current officers are Dr. David Shlim (president), Steve Mains (vice president), Kerry Moran (secretary) and Patrick Rice (treasurer).

CTF also has an extensive advisory board.

Please feel free to contact any of the above-mentioned people for further information on our projects and activities.



The new front entrance to the Buddha Hall

PRACTICE & STUDY GROUPS

With the blessings of Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche, practice and study groups are meeting in cities across the U.S. Sangha members gather on a regular basis to do group practice, discuss readings and watch teaching videos or DVDs. Please send an e-mail if you would like to join our meetings.

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RECOMMENDED READING

Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche has encouraged his Western students to study *The Thirty-Seven Practices of a Bodhisattva* by Gyalse Togme. Rinpoche has recommended, in particular, using *Uniting Wisdom and Compassion*, Heidi Koppel's translation of Chökyi Dragpa's commentary.

A LOOK BACK AT 2006

THE SPREAD OF THE DHARMA

It would have been hard to fit much more into one summer. Gomde and its sangha were blessed by the teachings of six incredible masters in 2006.

THE WAY OF THE BODHISATTVA

Dzigar Kongtrul Rinpoche returned to Gomde last June to continue his teachings as part of the Rangjung Yeshe Gomde Shedra for Western students. Picking up where he left off in 2005, he taught on the seventh and eight chapters of Shantideva's seminal text *The Way of the Bodhisattva*. He spent ten days at Gomde. In June '07, Rinpoche will complete the teachings, giving special attention to the famous ninth chapter on wisdom.

Imagine a day without any kind of attachment, attachment you're aware of as well as the kind you're not aware of. A day without any kind of aggression, jealousy, competitiveness or pride. We have to see the possibility for something like that to happen. The possibility is there because in the Buddhist teachings, if you remedy the root, you don't have to work with the symptoms one by one; they will be naturally also cured. What would that root be? Nothing other than one's own self-importance. Self-importance brings up these negative emotions throughout the day and night. Nobody will dispute how much they have suffered from their own attachment, aggression, jealousy, pride and arrogance. In the midst of an attack by emotions, you might defend or justify yourself, but at that time you're not entirely sane. Later when you regain your sanity, you gain it when you have some wisdom to fall back on, meaning you self-reflect and see what actually hurt you, how it hurt you, what could have been done differently. Sanity means you have wisdom to fall back on.



—Dzigar Kongtrul Rinpoche, from his teachings at Gomde, June '06.

TRAIN, TAME, GAIN

Chokyi Nyima Rinpoche spent ten days at Gomde giving his customary two summer seminars. He spent the first three days teaching on general points of Mahayana mind training in the open seminar. During his annual eight-day Dzogchen intensive, Chokyi Nyima Rinpoche taught on a special text entitled *Naturally Liberating Whatever You Meet*

by Khenpo Gangshar. A heat wave happened to arrive at the same time, temperatures reaching nearly 100 degrees or higher each day. In late afternoons, Rinpoche was often spotted cooling off with sangha members in Cedar Creek.

As followers of the Buddha, our responsibility is to study and apply the teachings. So we need to train. Through training, we need to tame. Through taming, there should be some gain. What is there to gain? To become a better person, to be happy, moment by moment, and helpful to others moment by moment. Often people who don't know the dharma think happiness comes from outside. When we watch a movie, for example, it can have all types of effects. Even though we know it's not real, but drama made by technology, it fools us into becoming happy, sad or bored. Everywhere information is sucking us out, telling us: This is good! This is bad! Buy this! This is the latest! We can watch children. When children aren't happy, so often their parents will buy them some new toy to please them. If we really don't check ourselves well, we become worse than children. This is where we need to distinguish between cause and circumstance. What is over there is a circumstance. The cause for happiness is here, within our mind. Between the two, the cause has more power. I can see clear proof of this looking around here. Many of you are staying in tents and eating quite simple food. Still, since we think what we have is okay, we are quite okay. I'm quite sure that when we part ways after a few days, many of us will feel sad. Why? Because of the harmony here, the love and care that are present between us. The food, tents, mosquito bites, become small issues. If we all stayed in five star hotels but didn't get along, then we'd be happy to leave, and mosquitoes become a big, big issue.



—Chokyi Nyima Rinpoche, from his teachings at Gomde, July '06.

ADVICE TO YOGIS AND YOGINIS

Phakchok Rinpoche, the grandson of Tulku Ugyen Rinpoche and son of Chokling Rinpoche came to Gomde for an intimate series of teachings. After leading us in a Trinley Nyingpo tsok feast ceremony, he taught for three days based on several songs of Milarepa.

It's very important to think of the kindness of course of our teachers, but also all sentient beings. Because of them we can practice compassion, generosity, discipline. When I was recently walking around San Francisco, for example, a beggar approached me and opened his hat. Usually we don't see this as an opportunity to accumulate merit. Sometimes we may even think negatively: "Why is he begging here? San Francisco used to be very clean." But look carefully and you see he's very kind. Because of him, you have the chance to practice generosity. If no one comes and begs from you, how are you going to practice generosity? We don't appreciate these chances.



—Phakchok Rinpoche, from his teachings at Gomde, August '06.

MANJUSHRI EMPOWERMENT AND TEACHINGS

Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche returned after several years of absence to pack Gomde to capacity for five days. He gave a Manjushri empowerment the first night. He then proceeded to teach for five days on the Manjushri practice in his unique and captivating style. Rinpoche also led us in a Trinley Nyingpo tsok feast, which we used as an occasion to have a talent show as an offering to him. Retreatants also gathered for a dance party to break in our newly completed dining tent the last night.

When we wash the dishes, even though we're looking at dirty dishes, the result—the clean dish—is in our head. The clean dish is the result, but it's also the ground. When we wash the dish, we have a longing based on reason that it will become clean. The ground, the true nature is clean, and thus it is washable. If we as the dishwasher have even a slight doubt about this, there's a big problem, we won't apply effort. The confidence that we do have is the essential meaning of 'deity.' In this analogy, when we wash the dish, the dirt being washed is the emerging of wisdom. When we set out to wash the dishes, we buy soap, a sponge, stuff like that. These things are similar to aspirations, praise, and making offerings—practices which constitute



the accumulation of merit. Still, all along, the most important thing is that you know it's washable. The fact that the ground and the wished-for result look different but are actually the same should be inside our head.

—Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche, from his teachings at Gomde, August '06.

RIPENING AND LIBERATION

Tsikey Chokling Rinpoche brought Gomde to life for three days at the end of August. He packed the weekend by bestowing two empowerments: Red Amitayus, for health revitalization and life extension, and Lama Norlha, a Dzambala practice for increasing positive circumstances and wealth infusion. He also gave detailed teachings on the Lotus Essence Tantra, considered the 'quintessence of one billion heart practices'.

For those of us practicing Vajrayana, three things are extremely crucial: the ripening empowerments, liberating instructions and supporting reading transmissions.



What is the purpose of empowerment? Through receiving the empowerment we are authorized to engage in a practice. When we also then receive the reading transmission, and some instruction on how to engage in it, we can actually practice it and receive some benefit. The example for this is growing a crop. In the West people eat a lot of wheat, in the East, we eat a lot of rice, but in either case you first have to plant the seeds. Many other things are also necessary for the seed to ripen into a plant, however. If you just put a seed in dry ground it won't grow, so in addition to the seeds, we need water, sunlight and fertilizer, which in Asia means cow dung. Similarly, if we receive these three crucial elements of Vajrayana, the blessings of the practice are able to enter into our being. Then when we do retreat our practice will be successful.

—Tsikey Chokling Rinpoche, from his teachings at Gomde, August '06.

BEYOND SPIRITUAL MATERIALISM

Gomde was extremely pleased to host Khandro Rinpoche for the first time in early fall, 2006. In her only trip to California in 2006, she gave three days of wonderful teachings on how to see through superficialities in our practice of the Dharma

in her usual straightforward style. We hope she will visit many more times in the future.

We often hear in the teachings about something called 'degenerate times.' A term closely related to that is 'spiritual materialism.' We don't have an equivalent term in Tibetan, but there is no teaching that doesn't



talk about it, either. The closest we do have may be 'sog chö,' 'pretentious Dharma.' Pretentious Dharma is not only a problem of these times; it has been a problem as long as humankind. Whether we're old or new practitioners, it's necessary to establish a correct and honest relationship to the dharma. If Dharma is for us a recreation activity, a hobby, a membership like we have to Starbucks or Barnes & Noble, in comparison to doing nothing, it's still good. On the other hand, if we look at the genuine purpose of the Dharma, we should see we're capable of more than that.

—Khandro Rinpoche,
from her teachings at Gomde, September '06.



LAMA TSULTRIM SANGPO

2006 was the second summer in a row in which we were graced by the presence of Lama Tsultrim Sangpo from Ka Nying Shedrub Ling Monastery in Nepal. Lama Tsultrim is an umse, or chant master, at the monastery. As well, he spent several years studying Buddhist philosophy and was one of the leading students in his class. Lama Tsultrim has also done a traditional three year retreat. Last summer, he spent over three months at Gomde. He taught the Kumara interns over several weeks on The Thirty-Seven Practices of a Bodhisattva, as well as leading us in study and practice and teaching short courses during the seminars of visiting lamas. Lama Tsultrim led a Padmasambhava feast ceremony in the Bay Area attended by many of our sangha. Lama will return to Gomde this summer, and we look forward to his continued presence. Please contact Gomde if you are interested in stopping by to meet and learn from him.



Lama Tsultrim

TURNING THE THREE WHEELS

The summer of 2006 also witnessed the inaugural year of Gomde's fledgling work, study and practice program for younger Dharma practitioners, the Kumara Internship Program. It proved to be hugely successful, transforming Gomde throughout the summer into a sanctuary for study and practice of the Dharma. Under the guidance of Lama Tsultrim, the interns studied Buddhist philosophy in-depth, and as well learned basic Buddhist meditation practice. During the work portions of the daily routine, the interns created an impressive work force to carry out a huge number of projects that had until now been merely ideas. The fruits of their work were clearly visible. Chokyi Nyima Rinpoche praised the program in his concluding talk at Gomde last summer as truly carrying out what is traditionally called the turning of the 'three wheels': renunciation, study and work. The program has already inspired a sister internship program at Gomde Denmark.



The '06 Kumara interns with Lama Tsultrim on the Sangha House porch.

GREAT-GREAT-DHARMA-GRANDMOTHERS

DZIGAR KONGTRÜL RINPOCHE'S VISION

FOR RANGJUNG YESHE GOMDE AND

DHARMA CENTERS IN THE WEST

(from his June '06 teachings)

*I*n these modern days, I feel that our Dharma community is what is going to support us the most. Try as best as you can to be responsible and take care of your family in the various ways that you have to, but really see that there is danger in it, because so many karmic seeds are ripening when one has a family. Being aware of those risks, try to include your family as part of a larger spiritual community. We have to also face some facts: parents get old, children have their own lives, they get married and have children themselves. We are nomadic people; we live where we get jobs, we travel, we move, we don't stay where our parents or grandparents stay. In the age of need, who takes care of us? You may expect your children to, but karmically it doesn't always work out that way in modern life. Parents are on the West Coast, children on the East. The children have jobs and their own family; at best they fly out and visit.

The family situation has changed in modern times. To have the same expectations as in the past would be stupid. Once you build a spiritual community, your Dharma friends seem to rise and be able to help when you need them. Since there is emphasis on doing that in the Buddhist teachings, people do so joyfully. It brings satisfaction to their hearts. We're not talking about physical needs but about what supports us the most mentally; what gives us a sense of security.

We should build our spiritual community in a way that it serves what we generally expect from family. For that to happen, we need to give care to our spiritual community and shape it in a positive way, like we would our own family. Treat the big spiritual community as real family, and treat everyone within that community as you would treat your own family. Rather than being competitive with others, be supportive. There will be a little bit of friction, but naturally this will create more space. If everyone behaves lovingly, sangha becomes the modern-day refuge.

Please try to build your spiritual community in this direction; it truly is the aspiration of all great teachers when they start Dharma centers. Dharma is the central thing, for people to study and gain liberation, but the support system is also very beneficial. Without sangha in the modern days, life is very difficult.



Gomde sangha meditating at future temple site

In light of this, I feel that out of all the charities, giving to your Dharma center is the best. I'm not saying this because I am myself a Dharma teacher trying to fundraise. I sincerely do believe from my heart that Dharma centers, as places of education, offer the most profound, most enlightening education. If a Dharma center becomes well established in the West, with teachers and students continuously coming together for the sake of the most profound education, the enlightenment of the mind, what can be better than that for the benefit of people? Hospitals? Schools? Yes, they are wonderful, and those are things that we must support if we have the means to. But we go to hospitals to be cured physically; we go to Dharma centers to cure our minds. So, between the two, there is no comparison. Schools are also wonderful, but between conventional education and Dharma education, again, there is no comparison. Other things we donate to, like museums, are really just for entertainment.

This is the time, because Buddhadharma is only now coming to the West. It's not yet established here, but has the chance to be. We are all part of the chance to establish it here for the benefit of not only ourselves, but future generations. It's not going to become firmly established without our support. If we contribute resources or labor to our Dharma centers now, they will eventually become well established and secured, and the education and practice of the Dharma will be continued in the world, generation after generation. Hopefully, in our lifetime, some new teachers will grow out of this generation,

and take things over from us. This is how Buddhadharma has supported mankind century after century

I'm thinking much more about future generations than this generation. You see every generation facing more and more and more confusion: lack of proper guidance, education, relationship to family and society as well as to our own minds. In future times, if there is a Dharma center like Gomde, and if there is a group of people who are seriously dedicated to Dharma practice and able to teach, so many people's minds will be helped. Whether the people who come to learn the Dharma remain, become successful practitioners and become completely enlightened or not doesn't matter. The Dharma teachings that they receive here will help their minds immensely.

We have a very good example: look at the monasteries recently built in India by Tibetan masters who settled there. They came over to India as refugees, and built these monasteries by their own sweat and blood. Now many Tibetan refugees send their children to these monasteries because they want them to become monks or nuns. From as young an age as three, Tibetan kids are sent to the monastery where they will be taken care of. Lamas are incredibly brave people to take these kids on—to feed, clothe and educate them—considering that in the end many of the monks and nuns leave the monasteries. From that point of view, the monasteries are failures, because so many of the monks and nuns who have entered have left. But on the other hand, these ex-monks and nuns have become the finest people in Tibetan society. They know how to respect the Three Jewels and how to value their culture. They've received a good education.

My point is, whether or not we produce from our Western Dharma centers enlightened beings, successful practitioners like Milarepa, the Dharma education that is being provided here will definitely affect individual lives, providing clarity and immense help for future generations. As Dharma becomes an integral part of culture, people will know how to value it. Think of yourself as a great-great-grandma or grandpa, and about your great-great-grandchildren getting a Dharma education some time in the future. They will not have any sort of conflict in themselves because their great-great-grandma was a Dharma practitioner, was a part of the movement of Dharma being established in the West. They will think, "Wow, my great-great-grandma studied this text and made herself free from confusion." The wisdom passed down is going to be part of their heritage; it's going to be the link between you and them.

The heritage is the consistent remedy, the consistent liturgy, the consistent education that we can apply to our mind and enlighten ourselves. Otherwise, what else is going to remain in the world? From fifty years ago until now, what has remained? Outwardly, nothing has. Think of how much has changed since the *Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*



Gomde's land managers and caretakers

was written in the 8th century until now. The world has changed in so many outer ways, but the basic mind of human beings has not changed. This text is still completely applicable. The Dharma is always going to be relevant in generations to come, if the teachings are passed on and practitioners and teachers are produced. Consider the heritage that we can leave behind for the benefit of future generations. I honestly feel that contributions to Dharma centers are the greatest gift we can make.

Please really think about this: this is what I myself work as hard as possible for, even though there's a lot of hassle in the administration of Dharma centers. Of course no one enjoys the hassles, the headaches, the stresses that pile up on your back.

My vision is this: we have the Dharma center itself, a community around the center supporting it, and at the center, simple accommodations where practitioners who run the center can stay. There will always be in the future practitioners who need simple accommodations. If Dharma centers with simple accommodations are established, people can actually live there and run the center, while the center supports them. The larger community can support the center, so that Dharma activity can continue in the center—so that many people can come and be educated in the Buddhadharma.

Try to aim toward this. We have a lot of effort to make. Gomde, in the few years that I've been here so far, already seems to have developed a sort of extended community who comes here, and there are simple accommodations. If a few people can stay here and live simply, taking care of the center while being supported by those who cannot actually live here, things will work out very beautifully. Instead of so many other things where you can be generous, be generous here, until Gomde is actually established to a point at which it's self-sustaining. I hope that Gomde will grow to this point, because there are going to be many more people in the future who will have karmic seeds ripening to come to the Dharma.

GOMDE REVAMPED

WHAT CHANGED AROUND THE LAND IN 2006

Thanks to the donations of generous sangha members as well the hard work of interns and volunteers under the expert leadership of Scott Updegrave, Nick Ostepeck and Robert Betonte, we were able to make an impressive number of improvements at Gomde in 2006:

SANGHA HOUSE MEETS THE 21ST CENTURY

We added an extension to the outdoor area of the Sangha House kitchen in order to accommodate a *new prep station*. We *expanded the kitchen* area to improve the dishwashing system. We installed a *commercial dishwasher* to handle the entire dish cleanup. As you noticed—No more handwashing dishes in tubs! We converted the former media room into a *pantry* for the kitchen, providing more much-needed space for the kitchen itself. As well, we bought a full supply of *new dishes*, cups and silverware for all retreatants. No more “Bring your own dishes!” Finally, we added a *new wash station* to serve the Port-a-Potties across the road from Sangha House.

ONE STEP FROM AN OUTDOOR TRATTORIA

We purchased and added a twenty-foot *extension* to the dining tent. We also added running water to the dining tent, *more tables*, *area heaters* for those cold mornings and evenings that come around sometimes, *hot water* for tea, and *lights* so people can come to meet in the evenings. We laid a *gravel walkway* between the dining tent and Sangha House so you won't have to tromp through dirt and grass.

CONSOLIDATING THE GOMDE OFFICE

We converted a room in the Gatehouse into the new *Media Room* to be nearer the Ratna Shop and office.

CRUCIAL IMPROVEMENTS AT LAMA HOUSE

We *added counters* to increase the kitchen prep area. We expanded the back pantry, and installed a *refrigerator*, *washer* and *dryer*, and *shelves* to increase storage and accommodate tea service. We installed central *air conditioning* to keep our precious lamas alive in the often sweltering summer heat.



'06 work week

MAKING THE CAMPGROUND MORE LIVABLE

We continue to try to improve comfort in the campgrounds. We built *four new showers* to improve access and reduce the wait. We also built *two new tent platforms* last summer (bringing us up to four), to support the spacious *tent cabins* we're adding to provide more comfortable accommodations (see photo this page). Lastly, we added *overhangs for the campground wash stations* to protect us from those infrequent summer showers.



One of the new tent cabins

BUDDHA HALL GETS A NEW HAT

You're in for a surprise this summer: In October 2006, we finally accomplished a job that had needed to be done for years. Yes, the Buddha Hall now has a *brand-new red roof!* Also, last summer the interns laid an attractive *walkway* leading to the porch which was added in 2005.

MORE WATER, A FEW LESS TREES

And that's not all. We purchased and installed two new 2,000-gallon *water storage tanks* to increase our water supply for dry periods. We made the Cedar Creek swimming hole much more inviting by adding *new benches* and a *ladder* into the creek. We added *air conditioning* in River House. Finally, in the fall of 2006, a team lead by sangha members *Jack Monschke* and *John Martin* brought down scores of potentially dangerous diseased pine trees in the campground. It was a big job, but in a few years native fir trees should take over, making the campground much more pleasant in the future.



The new dining tent

UNDER THE CTF UMBRELLA

NEW BOOKS FROM RANGJUNG YESHE PUBLICATIONS

Our Dharma friends Erik Pema Kunsang and Marcia Binder Schmidt published two new books during the last year. *Quintessential Dzogchen* is a compendium of pithy Dzogchen instructions and songs compiled by Marcia and translated by Erik. The third volume in the Dzogchen trilogy (the first two are *Dzogchen Primer*, published by Shambhala, and *Dzogchen Essentials*), it follows the thread of the previous books, while focusing on the last of the Four Dharmas of Gampopa, “confusion dawning as wisdom.” Tulku Thondup described it as “Imbued with the warm breath of many enlightened masters, an immense source of learning and blessings for all.”

Wellsprings of the Great Perfection, which came out late fall of 2006, is a bible-like collection of works on the ultimate origin and absolute teachings of Dzogchen. Compiled and translated by Erik Pema Kunsang, it is an in-depth look at the lives and insights of the early masters of the Dzogchen lineage. See excerpt on the following page.

Finally, RYP published an attractive revised edition of Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche’s classic *Repeating the Words of the Buddha*.

This fall, RYP will publish a book of teachings on Tara practice entitled *Skillful Grace*, as well as collecting two previously printed texts of Tsele Natsok Rangdrol, *Heart of the Matter* and *Lamp of Mahamudra*, into a single volume called simply *Lamp of Mahamudra and The Heart of the Matter*.

THE TED WORCESTER YANGDZOM HEALING HANDS PROJECT: REPORT ON THE INITIAL JOURNEY

Yangdzom Healing Hands, under the umbrella of CTF, conducted a humanitarian medical relief program in Nangchen, East Tibet from September 8-24, 2006. A dedicated and diverse group of fourteen volunteers traveled 5000 kilometers through the remote and spectacularly beautiful areas of Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche’s homeland, known as Nangchen.

Here’s what they accomplished:

- Brought Tibetan and Western medicines and medical supplies to five nunneries and monasteries.
- Identified and trained medical workers, with plans to expand the training.
- Donated funds for medicines and supplies for one year.



Yangdzom medical worker

- Gave financial aid to elderly and poor individuals.
- Investigated the possibility of establishing clinics in five monasteries and nunneries.

Group members treated over 500 patients, both lay and monastic, as well as practitioners in long-term retreat, with Western and Tibetan medicines.

On this initial trip, the group gained important connections in the area with Tibetan lamas who are eager to support the project. These include Tsoknyi, Adeu, and Wangdruk Rinpoches as well as Tsatrul Rinpoche, who has committed to being the primary contact person for the project and will oversee all future operations.

For more information, or if you would like to become part of this activity by sponsoring in any way, please contact Marcia Schmidt.

RATNA SHOP NEWS

Ratna Shop reopened in mid-February with some unique statuary designed by Thinley Norbu Rinpoche: a Guru Rinpoche with consort and a Vajrayogini. The shop is now restocked with most of the Chokling Tersar sadhanas. Recordings of earlier teachings are being remastered and should be on sale during the summer seminars. Current stock is now on sale for a 50% discount. Please visit www.gomdeusa.org/ratnashop.html.



AN ASPIRATION FOR THE GROUND, PATH AND FRUITION

Revealed by Rigdzin Jigmey Lingpa

Homage to Glorious Samantabhadra.

*The natural state, primordial, its nature unconstructed,
Is not a thing that does exist, and which the conquerors can see,
Nor is it nothingness, this basis of samsara and nirvana, everything.
While not a contradiction, it defies the reach of spoken words.
May we realize the natural state, the ground of Great Perfection.*

*Empty in its essence, the limit of a permanence is freed.
Cognizant by nature, it defies as well the limit of a naught.
Unconfined in its capacity, the basis for a myriad emanations.
Though seen as three, in fact, there is no separation.
May we realize the natural state, the ground of Great Perfection.*

*Well beyond the reach of thought, free of every fancy concept,
Beliefs in biased "is" and "isn't" fully crumble
And even Buddha's tongue falls short if this fact must be spoken:
A wakeful depth of open space beyond beginning, end or middle.
May we realize the natural state, the ground of Great Perfection.*

*And while the natural state is perfect, nonarising and pristinely
pure,
Its unformed radiance shines forth which is spontaneous presence.
These two are not apart, the greatest unity, a knowing that is empty,
Which, when it's realized, fulfills the basic state.
May we transcend both fault and error in the key points of the path.*

*The purity primordial removes the names for something viewed.
The knowing of the natural face unpacks the peels of meditation.
The absence of a reference point undoes the conduct's chains,
Converging in the natural matrix's unconstructed, naked state.*

*May we transcend both fault and error in the key points of the path.
Unhampered by the prejudice of good and evil thoughts,
And not suspended in indifference, in an absent-minded state,
This spontaneous expanse where rising and dissolving are unjudged
and unrestrained,
Is a state of natural, total knowing, basic voidance of selective bias.*

*May we transcend both fault and error in the key points of the path.
Within the pristine, space-like state of universal ground
The ground-displays of rigpa have dispersed like cloudbanks in the
sky,
As outward wakefulness reverses back within,
Into the Youthful Vase Body, the sphere endowed with six
distinctions.*

May we seize command over the royal stronghold of fruition.

*Within Samantabhadra, the pristine and natural knowing,
All ambition for achievements vanish into basic space.
Concepts of effort all transcended, Great Perfection's natural state,
The spacious sphere of Kuntuzangmo which is rigpa's openness.
May we seize command over the royal stronghold of fruition.*

*The nature of the Middle Way is a complete nondwelling,
While Mahamudra's state is open vastness, all-pervasive,
And spaciousness beyond confines the key point of the Great
Perfection;*

*The sphere where path and levels' virtues are completely present,
naturally, within the ground.*

May we seize command over the royal stronghold of fruition.

This excerpt is printed with the permission of Rangjung Yeshe Publications. It is taken from *Wellsprings of the Great Perfection* (2006), the production and printing of which was made possible by a grant to CTF.



**VOLUNTEER WEEK
MAY 19TH TO 28TH 2007**

Please mark your calendars! This seminar season Rangjung Yeshe Gomde will host its Volunteer Week from May 19th to 28th. People with all levels of skill are welcome. There is something for everyone to do.

We will be working to finish the interior of the Buddha Hall, setting up the dining tent, and getting the land ready for seminars by cleaning campsites, building tent platforms, clearing brush and overgrowth, mowing, and much more.....

We would also appreciate any volunteer cooks (if you are interested, please contact Ani Marcia at adminassist@gomdeusa.org).

Volunteers will be given free room and meals while at Gomde and may join the staff in daily morning practice. Partial participation is also an option. If you would like to help but are unable to join us at these times, please contact Paco Dreher (pacod@pacbell.net) for an alternative work assignment. We are always in need of donations to help improve Gomde.

GOMDE'S CURRENT WISH LIST

We're currently seeking donations for the following items and projects:

- Improvements to the Buddha Hall:
 1. Tape and prepare for painting
 2. New interior ceiling
 3. Complete windows and doors inside
 4. Paint interior
 5. New lighting system
- Repair two collapsing culverts at Bardo Bend
- Road work: re-grade and smooth out the roads
- Improve water system
- Kumara Internship Program
- New computer
- More tent cabins
- More lights on paths
- Intensive poison oak removal
- Four more Port-a-Potties

Please see the above info on Volunteer Week if you would like to help with any of these improvements. Contact Ani Marcia (adminassist@gomdeusa.org) if you would like to donate an item or support any of these projects by contributing to the Gomde Capital Improvement Fund.



A swimming pool in the Eel River

**KUMARA INTERNSHIP PROGRAM
APPLICATIONS OPEN FOR SUMMER '07**

Students are warmly invited to participate in the second year of the *Kumara Internship Program*, a combination of meditation, study, and work. We are delighted to offer young Dharma practitioners an opportunity to spend the summer on Gomde's land in an atmosphere of practice and learning. Interns will be able to attend our annual teaching programs and receive instructions in other Buddhist disciplines under the guidance of a resident lama as well as senior students. In exchange, interns will spend four hours each day carrying out worthwhile work toward Gomde's upkeep.

Qualifications

- Age 25 or under
- Student in a certified academic institution
- Have taken refuge
- Various skills to facilitate the running of the center and programs and/or physical labor

Time Period: May 24-July 2 and/or July 3-August 10th
Due to increased interest in shorter time commitments, we offer two programs and advanced teachings for returning interns.

Requested donation to cover basic living expenses: \$300-\$1000

If you have questions, please contact Zack Beer at kumara@gomdeusa.org

For inquiries and applications, please visit www.gomdeusa.org.



OTHER NEWS FROM 2006-07

Ryan Damron took up the land manager position at Gomde from October '06 to April '07.

NEW IN 2007!

KARUNA WORKSHOPS AT GOMDE. We hope to begin a series of benefit workshops for Rangjung Yeshe Gomde, held on topics such as the Arts, Spirituality & Creativity, Contemplative Living, the Five Keys, Healing, Skillful Grace, Qigong & Yoga, Awareness Movement & Psychology, and How the Spirit Can Mend the Psyche. Workshop leaders will be well-known & skilled practitioners.

Check the website for further information.

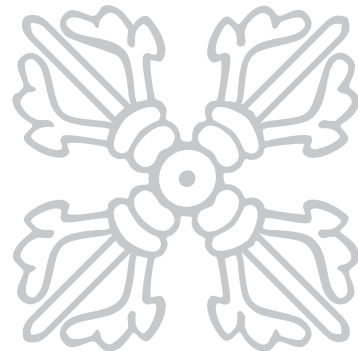
READ IT FIRST IN THE CHOKLING TERSAR TIMES!

A well-informed source has leaked that the official hair cutting & enthronement ceremonies for the Tulku Urgyen reincarnation, Urgyen Jigmey Rabsel will take place the beginning of February 2008.

UPCOMING IN 2008!

We eagerly look forward to Rangjung Yeshe Gomde's 10-year anniversary party, which will be highlighted by the NGAKSO, THE OCEAN OF AMRITA, Vajrayana Mending & Purification Practice over a 3-day period with all of Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche's sons and a special guest.

Fundraising begins right now for this event to be held the first week of August 2008.



Chokling Tersar Foundation

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