



*Chogyi Nyima Rinpoche following a hillside meditation session*

## Gomde e-News September 2008

Welcome to the first edition of Rangjung Yeshe Gomde's quarterly e-mail newsletter! It's designed keep you up to date with what's happening at Gomde and with our teachers, and to connect sangha members across the country. If you have comments, suggestions, or sangha news items of your own to announce, send an e-mail to Kerry at [information@gomdeusa.org](mailto:information@gomdeusa.org).

This first issue is packed with news: Gomde celebrated its 10th anniversary this year with a full season of teachings, a structural reorganization, and an excellent dinner party. Read on to find out about [recent teaching programs](#), [progress on the land](#), Gomde's [new Buddha](#), and upcoming [monthly retreat weekends](#).

### From the Land

This summer, Gomde got a new land manager (Lauren Phillips starts October 15th) and a new part-time caretaker (Kelly Bond, who lives in Leggett).

Early summer saw hundreds of wildfires ignited by lightning strikes in the biggest fire event in California history. Fires flared close to Leggett, although none seriously threatened Gomde. Not surprisingly, much of the work effort at Gomde this year focused on protecting against fire danger. A truly tremendous amount of brush was cleared between the Buddha Hall and the campground by Jack Monschke and his crew.

More progress: the interior of the Buddha Hall got a further facelift, with wood surrounds installed on the doors and windows and a new coat of paint. The cooks all cheered as air-conditioning was installed in the Sangha House, along with a new 10-burner stove and a new deck. In the near future we'll be looking to re-side, re-insulate and paint the Sangha House. The Garden was revamped too, with a clearing of its outer perimeter



*View from the new retreat area*

### Retreats at Gomde

A very successful silent auction in July raised \$41,000 for the development of Gomde's retreat land. A stretch behind the campground parking lot overlooking

that will hopefully become a *kora* walk with prayer wheels.

Drilling another well to ensure a steady supply of water is crucial for Gomde's future development. This summer, we called in a qualified dowser, Mike at Stonegate Villas. Mike dowsed a site at Gomde 10 years ago that for various reasons was never drilled. After some friendly chastisement, he agreed to come over for another go-round. He ended up selecting a site in the Shedra Meadow, near the mother tank. (No, we don't think tank overflow influenced the decision). We hope to drill in early October, before winter rains begin. Please send out prayers and good wishes for an abundant flow of good water!

the Eel River was cleared this summer in preparation for several cabins.

In the meantime, individual retreats at Gomde can be done starting November 1. Middle House and River House are available on a daily rate basis for both short- and long-term retreats. Each house has three bedrooms, two baths, and a fully equipped kitchen. Retreatants may use the Sangha House library and Shrine Room whenever they are free, and are welcome to join staff members in group practice. Click [here](#) for more information on policies and to make reservations.



*silent auction and party*

### **Ratna Shop Offers New Teachings on DVD/Mp3**

Recordings from this year's seminars are available through Ratna Shop:

\*Dzigar Kongtrul Rinpoche on Chandrakirti's *Introduction to the Middle Way*, Part One (Chapters 1-6). **DVD of 11 teaching sessions, \$130.**

\*Chogyi Nyima Rinpoche on *The Six Points of the Jewel Ornament of Liberation*, including a copy of

### **Summer Teachings and Celebrations**

Gomde celebrated its 10th anniversary on July 19 with an outdoor party and silent auction to raise funds for the new retreat land. Generous donors offered items ranging from fine wine to antique butterlamps, and auctioneer Steve Estelle's strategy of conducting the final bidding just before dinner proved to be a great success: \$41,000 was raised in a few short minutes, and everyone dove into a special Indian feast. The following day, Chogyi Nyima Rinpoche led sangha members in a day-long celebration of the *Ocean of Amrita* Ngakso Puja.

The busy teaching season began in June, with Dzigar Kongtrul Rinpoche's explanation of *Introduction to the Middle Way*. Chogyi Nyima Rinpoche spent 11 days at Gomde in July, teaching on the *Jewel Ornament of Liberation* and the beautiful songs of realization contained in *Flight of the Garuda*.

Tsoknyi Rinpoche arrived shortly after and gave precise instructions on distinguishing between mind essence and subtle states of delusion. The following week, Chokling and Phakchok Rinpoches came to teach, give empowerments, and lead another day of *Ocean of Amrita*. Next year's teaching program will include Dzigar Kongtrul Rinpoche (June) and Chogyi Nyima Rinpoche (July).

Debbie Weinberger and Shabad Khalsa joined the Chokling Tersar Foundation board this summer, along with new member David Shlim. Graham Sunstein will be taking a leave of absence from the board and from Gomde starting in March in order to focus on practice. In other changes, new work teams were

Gampopa's *Path of the Single Cut*.  
Mp3 \$35, DVD \$70.

\*Phakchok Rinpoche's discussion of 'Mending and Purification'. DVD, \$15.

organized with the following leaders:

**Administration & Finance:** Joanne Brion

**Gomde Land:** Graham (until March) and Paco Dreher

**Programs & Education:** (open)

**Communications:** Kerry Moran

**Fundraising:** Steve Mains

**Ratna Shop:** Ani Marcia Hansen

To order any of these online, go to  
<http://gomdeusa.org/ratnashop.html>.

## Buddha Hall Gets a Buddha

In a very auspicious coincidence, a new statue of Shakyamuni Buddha was delivered to Gomde this summer just two hours before Chokyi Nyima Rinpoche's arrival. The 4 1/2-foot-high image is a replica of a relic from Nalanda in Rinpoche's possession. The statue is one of several that have been made for Rinpoche's international centers by skilled craftsmen in Thailand. Another 1,000 smaller images of the statue are being made for the gompa at Lumbini.

On July 18, the Buddha statue was ceremonially unwrapped and placed on Rinpoche's throne in the Buddha Hall. Another auspicious coincidence was the donation of the 108-volume *Kangyur* by Juan Gutierrez. The books were carried around the outside of the Buddha Hall in a procession led by Rinpoche before being installed on the shrine. Over the course of the following week, "Carpenter Kings" Scott Updegrave, Nick Ostapeck and Claude Herail, working during breaks in the teachings, built a large wooden shrine to hold the new Buddha, texts, and future statues.



*the new Buddha statue*



Chokyi Nyima Rinpoche, Chokling Rinpoche  
and their mother, India 1959

## Sangha Weekends Start in October

To help cultivate sangha, spark a new spirit of involvement -- and help all of us practice more -- Gomde will be holding monthly weekend retreats open to all who are interested. The emphasis will be on practice, work and community, with shared meals and time for individual practice, group practice and discussion, and useful work like weeding the garden or cleaning the barn -- however we can help the land manager.

The cost for food and lodging for the weekend is only \$25 -- we want you to come! **The first event will be Oct 24-26**; future dates will be posted on the website. If you plan on attending, please give us a call, or send an e-mail to [programs@gomdeusa.org](mailto:programs@gomdeusa.org).

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