

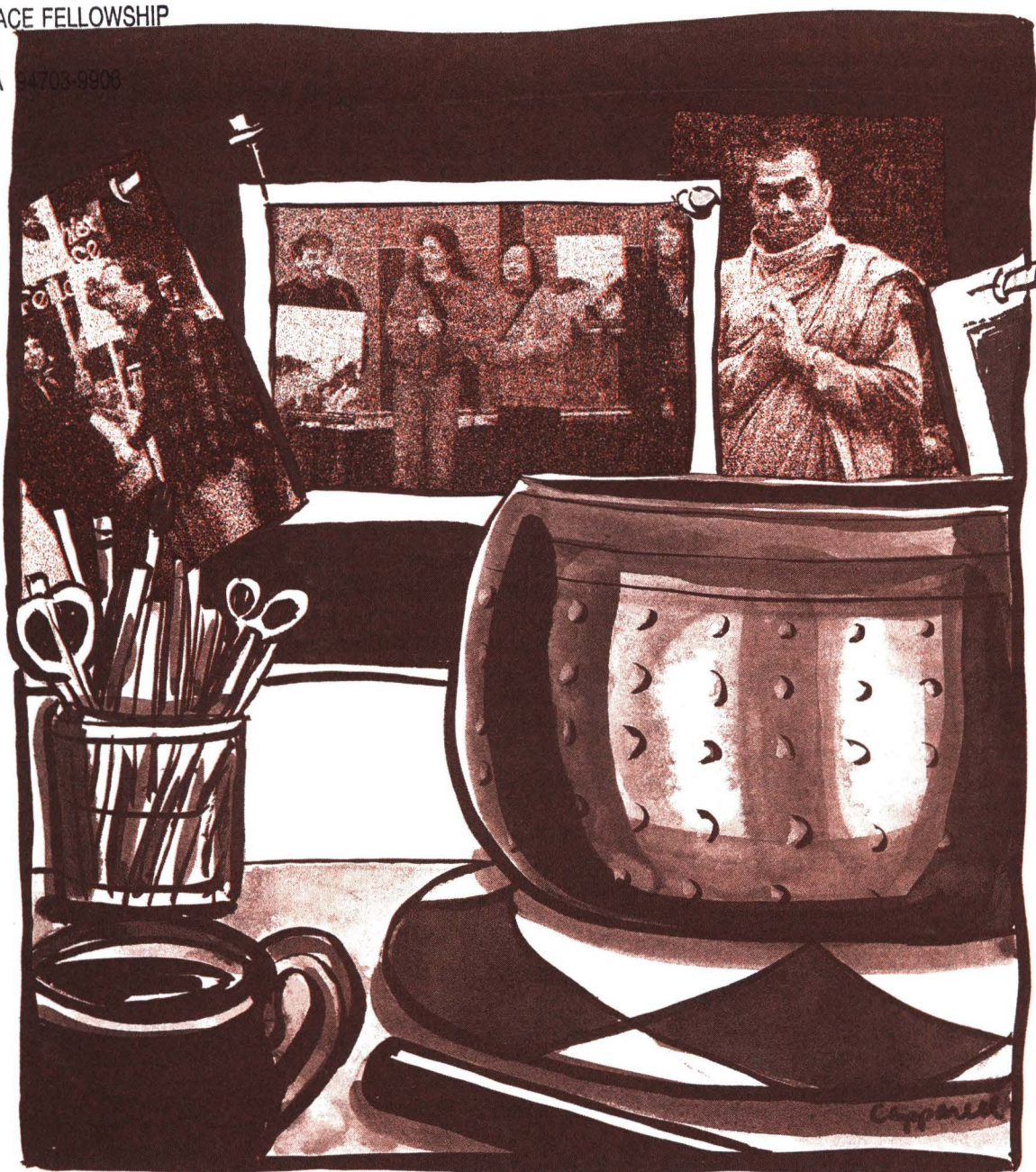


TURNING WHEEL

Journal of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship

Fall 1993 \$4.00

BUDDHIST PEACE FELLOWSHIP
P.O. BOX 3470
BERKELEY, CA 94703-9903



Engaged Lives ❖ ***Ordinary Lives***

Voices of socially engaged Buddhists on

AIDS education ❖ Feeding the hungry ❖ Bosnian rape camps
Nazi Germany ❖ Malaysian monasticism ❖ Deep ecology

FROM THE EDITOR

engaged (*en-gajd'*) 1. Employed, occupied, or busy. 2. Committed to a cause. 3. Pledged to marry; betrothed. 4. Involved in conflict or battle. 5. Being in gear; meshed. 6. Embedded, built into, or attached to another part, as columns on a wall.

—*American Heritage Dictionary*, 1992

What is an engaged life? An engaged Buddhist?

In a sense, we're always in gear—meshed with and sometimes battling the circumstances of our lives. Certainly, we're usually occupied and busy—we're busy just by getting up in the morning. And after all, every part of the universe is *already* built into, embedded in every other part, right? Oneness, co-dependent arising, and all that.

But this kind of talk sometimes sounds a bit too glib to me; it goes down too easy, like Buddhist pabulum. A column doesn't simply appear in a wall—a crafts-person must use skill and wit and just the right tools to fit the column into its particular groove. And a gear doesn't truly engage unless it's begun to turn. Every breath we take can't help but turn the wheel, true—but a little elbow grease and a sense of direction turn that wheel into a vehicle that can take us places, places we've never been, places where we're needed: Bosnian rape camps, the bedside of a friend with AIDS, our own bioregion.

Maybe this is all preaching to the converted. Don't we, *Turning Wheel* readers of all people, know we must, like Avalokiteshvara, actually engage with the myriad, multitudinous cries of the world? Perhaps. But Buddhism (and this and every issue of *Turning Wheel*) often seems to me like nothing more than a reminder of the most obvious thing: that we are gifted with this beautiful, horrible human existence and an ability to know and respond not only to our own aches, but those of friends, neighbors; a seagull skidding along the beach, caught in fishing line . . .

To be sure, an engaged life is an ordinary life—for to engage, to mesh with any problem, we must become intimate with all the ordinary details and people that compose it: the phone number to call, the chopstick made of rainforest wood, the person screaming or weeping in our face. This issue of *Turning Wheel* pays homage to the ordinary, engaged lives we live. And it is the ordinary, after all, that Buddhism teaches us to notice and hold sacred.

It's not an easy time to attend to the ordinary. I've often thought we're not designed for this crazy late-20th century world; our biology is exquisitely attuned to a life of gathering nuts and fruits with a small, intimate band of friends and relations—not this sped-up merry-go-round of fast-spinning gears. But that's too easy to say, too: Here I am. Here we are. "What is it," asks poet Mary Oliver, "you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?" My own precious life is coming into full, middle-aged bloom in the heart of the AIDS epidemic, conflict in my own backyard and across the world, and the utter devastation of so much of what I call home (my American heritage, alright). Each wild and precious life (and sometimes an entire species) arises from everywhere and nowhere, flashes in its particular colors and lights, and is gone. ("Doesn't everything die at last, and too soon?" asks Mary Oliver.)

Today—embedded in this place and time, this autumn morning, the fog and smog—*this* particular gear turns, engages its fellow wheels and cogs, and rolls on . . . ♦

— Denise Caignon

Coming themes for *Turning Wheel*:

Winter, '94: Right speech/free speech. Deadline: November 15.

Tentative themes for **Spring '94:** Environmental activism. Deadline: January 17.

Summer '94: Nonviolence. Deadline: April 18.

ON THE COVER — Drawing by Lorraine Capparell. Photos, from left: BPF members in protest actions during the Gulf War; Bimal Bhikkhu from the Chittagong Hill Tracts (Bangladesh), now in exile in Calcutta, India.



TURNING WHEEL

Guest Editor, Fall '93

Denise Caignon

Editor

Susan Moon (on sabbatical)

Assistant Editor

& Advertising Director

Will Waters

Consulting Readers & Editors

Thelma Bryant, Ann Creeley,
Margaret Howe, Sandy Hunter,
Miriam Queen, Alan Senauke,
Meredith Stout, Nonnie Welch

Production & Design

Lawrence Watson, Denise Caignon,
Nanda Currant, Will Waters

For advertising rate sheets, please
contact the National Office.

International Advisory Board

Robert Aiken, A.T. Ariyaratne, Ane
Pema Chodron, V.B. Dharamawara,
Christina Feldman, Thich Nhat Hanh,
Maha Ghosana, Lodi Gyari, Mamoru
Kato, Joanna Macy, Sulak Sivaraksa,
Gary Snyder, Christopher Titmuss

National Coordinator

Alan Senauke

The Buddhist Peace Fellowship was founded in 1978, to bring a Buddhist perspective to the peace movement, and to bring the peace movement to the Buddhist community. Membership and subscription information are on the back cover. Single copies \$5.00 postpaid from:

BPF National Office.

Box 4650, Berkeley, CA 94704
510/525-8596

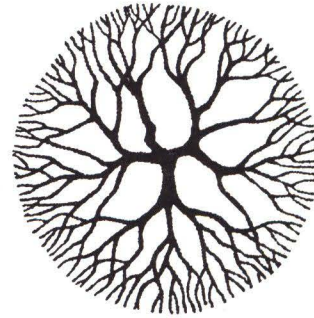
© 1993 Buddhist Peace Fellowship
ISSN 1065-058X

printed on recycled paper

C O N T E N T S

REGULAR DEPARTMENTS

- Letters/4
- Readings/11
- Education Column/14
- Ecology Column/13
- Coordinator's Report/43
- Chapter News/44
- Announcements and Classifieds/45



- Avoiding Sexual Abuse: An Open Letter, *by Les Kaye/12*
- In Memoriam: Buddhadasa 1903 – 1993, *by Kenneth Kraft/15*

ENGAGED LIVES

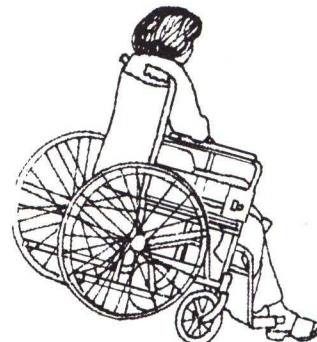
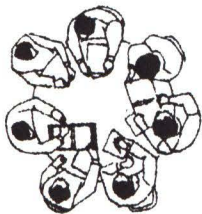
- Experiments in Engaged Buddhism, *by BPF members & engaged others/16*
- Bundles of Love: Birth of a Social Change Project, *by Tova Green/20*
- Waking from the Nightmare: Village Women Take Action, *by Margaret Howe/21*
- This Very Bell, *by Denise Caignon/24*
- Renegade Bodhisattva, *by Maylie Scott/27*
- Belly Full of Salmon, *by Stephanie Kaza/30*
- Dogs Do Bark, Babies Do Cry, *by Denise Caignon/32*
- Cultivating Lotuses in the Mud, *by Diane Ames/36*
- Sacks of Rice & Houses of Straw, *by Janine Kenyon & Jane Brecker/38*

BOOK REVIEWS

- Margaret Howe on Joe Gorin's *Choose Love/42*
- Books in Brief, *by Alan Senauke/43*

ART

- Lorraine Capparell/cover
- Diane Solomon/22



An invitation to come practice with us.

The Kwan Um School of Zen is an international community of meditators. Founded by Zen Master Seung Sahn, since 1972 we've established Zen Centers across North America and around the world.

You're invited to come learn meditation and to practice with us at one of our affiliates. We also publish **Primary Point**, an international journal of Buddhism. Write or call, and we'll send you a free sample issue, including a list of our Zen Centers.

The Kwan Um  School of Zen

528 Pound Road, Cumberland, Rhode Island 02864
(401) 658-1476

DHARMA COMMUNICATIONS

MEDIA SUPPORT FOR SPIRITUAL PRACTICE



- 1993 CATALOG
- Audio Tapes
 - Video Tapes
 - Books
 - Periodicals
 - Home Practice Supplies
 - Gifts

P.O. BOX 156 TW, MT. TREMPER, NY 12457 (914) 688-7993

LETTERS

On Money

(Summer 1993 *Turning Wheel*)

Dear *Turning Wheel*:

As a longtime Buddhist practitioner in California and Alaska, more recently accountant/manager of an economic development consulting firm in Washington D.C. (providing economic policy advice to Third World governments, under contract to USAID), and now a graduate student in economics, I found your most recent issue on "Money" especially interesting. Among many articles I enjoyed, I greatly admired Gordon Tyndall's on "Buddhism and Capitalism" for clearly and compassionately expressing many relevant economic insights.

I would respectfully take issue with the first of the "Readings," however: the article entitled "Free Trade and Interdependence" by Steven Gorelick. I certainly agree with his concerns to protect the environment and to develop local economies and the democratic process, but it is not at all clear to me that restricting trade serves these purposes. Third World economies need to grow too. Even New Zealand (to use one of Mr. Gorelick's examples) needs markets, as do we Americans!

Carried to the extreme (and why not?), the line of argument used would lead to each individual or family—or, at most, each small, walking-distance community—producing totally for him/her/itself. That would put us back in the Stone Age, with a very low standard of living and life expectancy less than 40 years. But if gains from specialization and trade between individuals and families within any given local community (or nation) are legitimate, why should we deprive ourselves of similar gains on a larger scale?

There is no doubt that we need democratic political organizations capable of dealing with environmental and other problems which transcend national boundaries, and we also need reinvigorated local communities. Are these ends—or means—mutually exclusive?

Why not create a democratically-elected governing body for North America, for instance? Or one for all of the industrial democracies (Europe, N. America, Japan, Australia and New Zealand, etc.), who do most of the world's trading, and whose unstable individual currencies repeatedly create havoc, not only for themselves but for the rest of the world as well. Or one for the world as a whole, transforming the UN? (Or perhaps, like nested dolls, do all three?)

If Third World nations (or New Zealand) can produce something cheaper or better than we can, why not let them develop their economies by doing so, and let us turn to something which *we're* relatively better (and therefore cheaper) at? We will all benefit from the increased quantity, quality and variety of goods and services.

If multinational corporations can get away with murder on the international stage because no one has the power to oversee and regulate them, then let an appropriate worldwide democratic body be created to do so. If the "true" costs of trade are distorted by relatively cheap but soon-to-run-out oil, then let oil be taxed by that body. If overproduction threatens to exhaust nonrenewable resources and bury us in pollution, then let the appropriate specific products be taxed or regulated as necessary, worldwide—not just at artificial national borders—to redirect demand towards goods and services with less harmful side effects. And if we really want to maintain otherwise unprofitable businesses (perhaps small family farms?) and are willing to pay the costs, then let's subsidize their income directly.

But if we narrow our vision and refuse to grow into a world community, interdependent in trade as in other ways, we will not only fail to make the transition to a recyclable "spaceship Earth" economy, we will also fail to create the circumstances in which the Third World can make the great leap which the rest of us have already made into relative health and prosperity. We will probably also fail to find ways to reinvigorate our local communities—because it is largely the growth of *national* governments, attempting vainly to provide security amidst manifold problems much too large for them, which are choking those local communities.

—Rick Wicks, Göteborg, Sweden

Dear Turning Wheel:

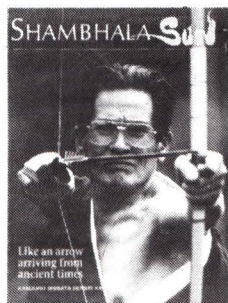
A Reading in the Summer issue of *Turning Wheel* argued against free trade, the GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) and NAFTA (the North American Free Trade Agreement), saying: "Interdependence in economic terms refers only to links between nations in the new global economy."

Free trade and interdependence in economic terms is far more a link among people who produce and consume, a link which governments, sometimes reluctantly, permit. It is an enfranchisement, mediated by businesses large and small, a step away from the historic dominance of the state and a few local corporations over individual economic life, not the other way around. There is more, not less choice, because of it.

It is misleading to make villains of multinational corporations: imperfect as they (and all of us) are; without them, fewer people could buy goods and find employment. Without GATT only the elite would own modern appliances. Producers of agricultural goods in poorer countries would be even more restricted than they are now from selling their goods in wealthier countries, and consumers in these countries would have a more expensive life and share less of their money with the rest of the world.

THE SHAMBHALA SUN IS SELLING OUT...

Yes, the *Shambhala Sun* will be selling out in bookstores, newsstands and health food stores all across North America. Starting in September, the *Shambhala Sun* will appear in a new magazine format that's serious but lively, contemplative but contemporary, timeless but topical.



Because we're convinced—in a world that's never been hungrier for the wisdom of the Dharma—that we can sell out without selling out.

A Special pre-launch offer to readers of *Turning Wheel*:

Subscribe now at 33% off the newsstand price and receive the first issue of the new *Shambhala Sun* magazine. Regularly \$24/year, now:

\$16/one year *Canada and Europe add \$6.00*

Shambhala Sun, 1345 Spruce St., Boulder, CO 80302 • VISA/MC: (902) 422-8404

The most common mistake in economics is to look only at one segment of the cycles which money makes. Like everything else, money goes around and comes around, whether spent or saved. It is easy to deplore jobs seemingly lost through imports, but both exports and imports, as well as the capital transactions which finance them, make jobs. To decry free trade is to play into the hands of monopolists everywhere, to work against the ordinary worker and consumer. We may think consuming is overdone, but the way to lessen its role in society is not to impoverish people.

We live in a world in which information, demand, supply, travel, and cultures of all kinds are thoroughly interlinked. It is not (in material and social terms) the world the Buddha lived in. The world the Buddha lived in could not begin to support the present population of the world, let alone the ten or more billion people who will soon be with us whether we like it or not. This world is better and it is worse. We cannot only look at the bad side or rather, if we do, we live in a daydream of our making, not the world others share. Admittedly everything needs improving. Returning to isolated economic islands won't improve anything.

—Michael May, Pleasanton, California

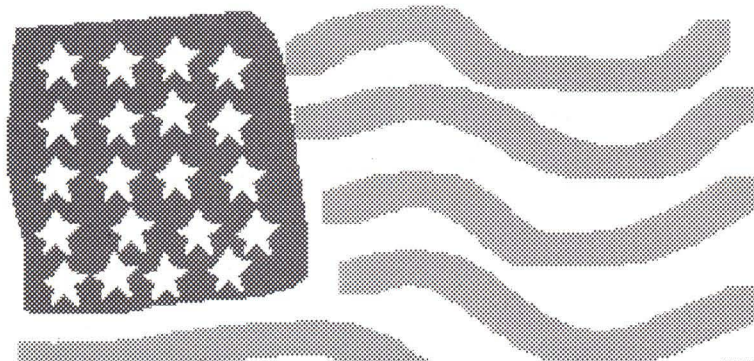
Dear *Turning Wheel*:

I was impressed with Andrew Cooper's remark (*Turning Wheel*, Spring 1993) that "understanding

that conceptual designations shape perception is . . . familiar to students of Buddhism. But Buddhist analysis tends to focus on the ultimate emptiness of all concepts, and remains naive about the ideological forces that lead to the production of particular ones."

D. Gordon Tyndall's "Buddhism and Capitalism" (*Turning Wheel*, Summer 1993) provides an excellent example of why it is so important to understand those ideological forces that Andrew Cooper refers to. Tyndall, in suggesting that capitalism *per se* is not necessarily always a problem, uses the category of "private individual," which presumably stands in opposition to the "public." The capitalist system is based on the premise that there is a clear distinction between the two. In fact, the market system requires that each individual be allowed to pursue his or her own interests without regard to the interests of others, the idea being that the market, responding to the demand for goods and supplies available, will work in such a way as to ensure the best overall outcome.

There is a basic problem with this from a Buddhist perspective (and from the perspective of most other religions as well). It demands that each person deny his or her interconnectedness to others. It also excludes from consideration the interests of future generations as well as those of non-human beings. It further assumes that the interests which people seem to "maximize" are strictly ones that can be produced and sold



Red, White, and Buddhist.

Never before has Buddhism been introduced into a culture that honors democracy, diversity and feminism. And this meeting of cultures makes for one of the most fascinating dialogues taking place today.

Tricycle is the independent forum for this important conversation. Join today, and find out for yourself what everyone is talking about.

For information about subscribing to Tricycle, please call: 1-800-950-7008

t r i c y c l e
THE BUDDHIST REVIEW

as commodities. In my opinion, it is the height of folly to rely on some abstract "law of supply and demand" to correct for such a lack of consciousness.

Markets never really operate in the unbiased way Mr. Tyndall suggests. They are subject to all sorts of politically defined rules such as tax policies, accounting practices, government subsidies, zoning laws, and environmental rules and regulations. In other words, a market is part of a socially constructed reality that is built up from the collectively held perceptions of its participants.

Anything shaped by politics is anything but private, so I find it curious that Mr. Tyndall treats corporations as private, claiming that they are owned by "private individuals." As anyone with even casual knowledge of current events is painfully aware, corporations are political as well as economic entities, and yet their leaders are not accountable to the millions of people whose lives they affect.

Mr. Tyndall also asserts that the advertising industry is the source of much of the needless consumption that goes on under the capitalist system. If only that were so. The creation of desire for goods is an intrinsic part of the system. Our entire economy is predicated on compound interest and hence compound growth. If a company's profits fail to grow, the price of its stock will fall drastically. For businesses to sell more, all of us must consume more. And if we aren't inclined to do so on our own, there is an entire industry that exists to plant the seeds of desire in our collective psyche.

I agree with Mr. Tyndall that much of the damage caused by the capitalist system is due to greed. While I don't claim that greed is found only in capitalist economies, it does seem to be particularly rampant today. I believe that fear is the driving emotion behind greed. And most of us who live under market systems must face the fact that our economic fate is pretty much ours and ours alone. We live in a society that is increasingly unable to care for its "non-productive" members, not only its sick, but its children and grandparents as well. Hence many people try to accumulate as much as possible to secure themselves against disaster. Of course, no amount is really enough if you are alone in the universe.

So what would I advocate instead? There are other alternatives besides state socialism or primitive agrarian systems. We could have regionally based economies in which basic food, clothing, and shelter are produced by local communities and shared by their members rather than sold through the market system. Fancy stuff and surpluses could be traded through markets. This is pretty much the way it was done before the Industrial Revolution, and with appropriate technology we could do it more easily today. And we'd have a lot more time left over to meditate.

One more point about money. Suzuki Roshi commented that since money is what we use to exchange one thing for another, it is simply a part of the way everything changes. That is true enough. But there is

also a dark side to the exchange value of money under capitalism. In a market economy where everything is treated as a commodity, the use of money can blur distinctions that we wish to retain.

Through the magic of money, the value of a train-load of frisbees can be compared to that of a stand of virgin trees, or even a human life. When the mother of a friend of mine died as the result of an egregious error by the staff in a hospital, the lawyers involved in subsequent legal proceedings set a price on the value of her life. It was based on her prospective earning power if she had been able to live out her expected life span. Since she was old and had few marketable skills, her life was worth very little.

In a sense, the lawyers demonstrated how—through money—we can express the emptiness of all categories of thought. But I seriously doubt that's what Suzuki Roshi had in mind.

—Jeff Kaplan, San Francisco, California

Gordon Tyndall responds

I was pleased that Jeff Kaplan agrees with my primary point that "much [I would say "all] of the damage caused by the capitalist system is due to greed," but I would like to comment on certain other statements in his letter.

(1) It is true that "the market system requires that each individual be allowed to pursue his or her own interests without regard to the interests of others," but though each individual is *allowed* to act in this way, there is nothing about the market system that *requires* him to act in this way, so no denial of interconnectedness is required by the market system.

(2) I never suggested that markets in the real world operate in a political and social vacuum. My use of the word "private" simply referred to the ownership of enterprises.

(3) I believe it is clear that advertising causes much of the needless consumption in our system and do not understand Mr. Kaplan's argument on this point.

(4) Finally, I agree that the use of money has its negative side, but would point out that even the most primitive societies have found it indispensable. I certainly can't see how Mr. Kaplan's "regionally based economies" would function without it, particularly if their members are as greedy as the typical citizen of today's world.

Dear Turning Wheel:

I read with interest your recent issue on money (*Turning Wheel*, Summer 1993). Presently, I find myself without much money because I am unable to work. However, it is quite curious that I am being paid not to work (by the U.S. Social Security Administration) because I am disabled. Not that I am complaining—I really appreciate this benefit. I count myself lucky to receive a monthly check while my status continues. I realize also that when I did work I contributed to this fund.

Two things are not in balance here. One is that the American work ethic has taught me to expect payment for the work I do—not for the work I *don't* do. (Is this like a farmer being paid for not planting a crop?) Secondly, if I were living in a country that didn't have such a system, what would happen to me now? With little savings, what would I do to support myself financially, even though I am disabled? Perhaps I'd turn to my family for help if I had one. Or maybe I would end up on the street homeless, getting my needs for food, shelter and clothing met in whatever ways possible. As a woman, could I end up a prostitute as in Ms. Ames article, "I Can't Get a Job"? Of course, this is just speculation.

Not working, I receive money (probably a greater sum than I contributed when I was able to work) for my basic needs. My mind finds a gap here—something not exchanged, not worked for; and I ask, am I worthy to receive this support? Am I being greedy? Does the check I receive each month represent other people's money—money they themselves need now in this difficult financial time? Do I have a right to this money?

I know I'd feel a lot more comfortable if I worked "an honest day for an honest day's pay." Separated from these unknown folks something nags at me inside. What is it?

Perhaps I need to pay greater respect to this money (as Suzuki Roshi said in his lecture published in your issue) by doing something for the society. Since I am unable to work, can I meditate more and will this help society? Yes, I think so. My heart opens at this thought.

Hey, I really like it! Being paid to meditate. Meditating for my daily bread. Ah so!

—Jane Davis, *Waterlily*, New York

On Racism

(Spring 1993 *Turning Wheel*)

Dear *Turning Wheel*:

Having been a member of the Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) for the last fifteen years, I wish to thank the Revs. Tanaka and Imamura for their articles in your last issue. I am especially glad that Rev. Imamura pointed out the tendency of Euro-American Buddhists to ignore Asian American Buddhists.

I noticed that *Turning Wheel* did not hesitate to print the comments in these two articles about white racism directed against Asian Americans (which, alas, are all true). But your journal did not wish to print the article which I submitted about the BCA unless you could delete all suggestions that racism directed *against* whites is often a problem within it. Why the difference? In particular, you did not wish to print anything I had to say about the treatment of non-Japanese American and female ministerial students in the ministerial training program of the BCA's seminary, the Institute of Buddhist Studies.

I attended the IBS from 1985 through 1987.

During those years ministerial students in these categories made up the majority of ministerial students. And the constant reminders that this fact displeased many powerful people in the BCA were one factor that made my years there depressing. To give one example:

During this period, a committee of ministers was set up to screen ministerial candidates (it is formally known as the Ministerial Candidates' Affairs Committee). This committee, which was dominated by ministers known to hold very conservative views, immediately announced retroactive prerequisites for candidacy which excluded all of the students who seemed likely to apply, all of whom were Caucasian or part Caucasian. More liberal BCA leaders, notably the IBS board, protested with mixed results. That was only round one. So far so few students have dared to apply for ministerial candidacy that no clear pattern of discrimination has been established. But to this day this committee has, so far as I know, no woman members and no non-Japanese American members, even though most of the students it is screening are in these categories. And the paucity of applicants indicates, I think, that people feel discouraged from trying.

I think this subject should be discussed, not hushed up. It is important because the IBS is the only accredited Buddhist seminary in America. And in my opinion, it is important because the future of American Buddhism depends largely on how Asian American Buddhists and other Buddhists (whoever) treat each other. Asian American Buddhists happen to be the demographic future of American Buddhism, if it has one; just look at the numbers. But as things stand now, that future is doubtful. The tendency is for organized Buddhism to serve the first and maybe the second Asian American generations as a refuge against culture shock and racism. Filling this vital role becomes its great strength. But it also causes Buddhism to become so totally identified with an "old country" of fading memory that for subsequent generations, it becomes something to tuck away in the local museum of Asian American history along with their grandmothers' wedding kimonos, not something relevant to their own lives. They begin to say (this is an actual quote), "Mother, why should I go to the temple? I don't speak Japanese."

At this point Buddhist converts who are not Asian Americans can play a critical role. Their mere existence suggests to young Asian Americans that one need not be as culturally Japanese (or Korean or whatever) as their grandparents were to find Buddhism meaningful. Also, non-Asian Americans happen to supply most (not all, but most) of the convert zeal without which any religious movement soon atrophies. Asian American Buddhists can supply the continuity and stability, the general sanity, which converts, left to themselves, can lose. And once they realize that this trip is not just dust-covered tradition, Asian American Buddhists often supply great creativity.

Do I have to say that Buddhists need each other? The Buddha said that. The racial division within American Buddhism is so deep, it threatens the survival of the religion here. This warrants discussion, and discussion must be frank to be useful.

Finally—of course the BCA is not a monolith. It is made up of thousands of individuals, many of whom take a commendably compassionate attitude towards converts lighter or darker than themselves.

—Diane Patenaude Ames, El Cerrito, California

BCA responds

I have read the comments by Ms. Diane Ames concerning the problem of racism directed towards Euro-Americans within the Buddhist Churches of America, and particularly the Ministerial Candidate Affairs Committee. I would like to respond to some aspects of her letter.

I agree with the writer that issues such as racism, gender and sex discrimination, or other such questions, should be fully discussed even if the viewpoints expressed may be controversial. It is through discussion that ideas are sharpened and the adequacy of insight is revealed.

In the case in question, readers should clearly distinguish the Institute of Buddhist Studies Seminary and Graduate School from the committee to which she refers. With respect to the Institute, we have a policy of non-discrimination in all aspects of the school as a requirement to maintain our affiliation and accreditation with the Graduate Theological Union. Our program has always been open to scrutiny. However, her statements about depression during her study at the school tend to imply that the Institute itself was involved in what she regards as discrimination.

With respect to the committee in question, its establishment follows the general pattern of all religious denominations to review candidates for ministry and ordination. The school provides the academic training, but the denomination gives the approval to candidates. Professional certification is not in the province of the school.

Though I do not have the authority to speak for the committee itself, I would point out that when the committee was first established, it accepted into candidacy a Euro-American who is presently training in Japan, having received the encouragement and support of the committee.

As a Euro-American myself, I can truthfully say that I have not witnessed discrimination nor experienced it myself on purely ethnic grounds. When people of various ethnic backgrounds interrelate and negotiate relations, it is easy to claim discrimination in matters where there is disagreement. Since no clear pattern of discrimination can be seen, it is wrong to assume one when there is evidence to the contrary, such as the candidate mentioned above. Recently a woman has been accepted by the committee as a candidate.

The reason for the paucity of students desiring to become ministers is a concern for the denomination and the committee. Despite its long presence in the United States, Shin Buddhism is not as well known as Zen, Tibetan, Theravada and Nichiren Shoshu, and it does not advocate the type of practices which have attracted many Westerners to Buddhism. That is a matter of history, sociology and Buddhology which we cannot take up here. I must strongly disagree with Ms. Ames when she declares that the paucity of applicants indicates that people feel discouraged from trying. No one is prevented from applying. If anything, the problem goes deeper than just the activities of a committee in challenging young people to enter the ministry.

Nevertheless, among the various immigrant forms of Japanese Buddhism which came to America, the Buddhist Churches of America has more non-Japanese clergy than any other denomination. There are four fully ordained Euro-Americans active in the temples and one in training. Recently one Euro-American minister has been put in charge of a major temple and has been doing well with the majority Japanese American members. Should he continue to do well, it opens the way for others. I have had the privilege to serve the community in my capacity as Dean of the Institute of Buddhist Studies for seven years.

It would be facetious and dishonest to say there are no problems within the community of BCA. It is like other organizations which are trying to find their place in the modern scene, and opinions vary on the best way to proceed. However, to lay everything at the door of racism is inadequate. It is true that the future of American Buddhism and the BCA itself depends on how it can bring people of diverse backgrounds together with a common sense of purpose within the non-discriminating embrace of the Dharma.

I am hopeful that this response may offer an alternative and useful perspective on the problems addressed by Ms. Ames.

—Alfred Bloom

Dean and Honganji Professor of Shin Buddhism
Institute of Buddhist Studies, Berkeley, California

Dear Turning Wheel:

I just read Jack Carroll's letter to the editor in the Summer 1993 *Turning Wheel*, and I have to agree with him on several issues: American Buddhism has been very Eurocentric thus far. Also, Asian American Buddhists have been largely ignored in academia.

With regard to Asian American Buddhists, I have an additional comment to make about this issue. I myself am an Asian American Buddhist, born and raised in California. My family has lived in America for five generations now, and yet we are still treated as foreigners. Racism and hate crimes against Asians in the U.S.A. have persisted since we first arrived in the early 1800's. Yet many people (some Buddhists too) that I speak to

about this issue are either quick to change the subject or refuse to even listen. There has always been a certain amount of romanticism with regard to Euro-Americans and their views toward Buddhism, Taoism, and Eastern religions in general. However, racism and anti-Asian violence have been steadily rising in this country over the past decade and must be viewed as part of the reality for Asian Americans as well. To ignore our reality is to deny our existence as beings on this planet.

Films such as "The Rising Sun" contribute to the perpetuation of negative stereotypes of Asians which, in turn, has every possibility of affecting the rising trend in hate crimes against Asians and Asian Americans. Asian American organizations from San Francisco to New York are protesting the opening of this film.

—P. W. Hall, *President, Arizona Asian American Association, Flagstaff, Arizona*

On Animals

(Winter 1993; Spring 1993 letters)

Dear *Turning Wheel*:

Most of us use Discriminating Mind in regard to animals and their rights. One of the animal rights groups that appeals regularly for funds has a puppy, a kitten, and I believe some other variety of appealing creature on its stationary. We are rarely rallied in the name of cockroaches & such.

The story of Latude is a good lesson in mindfulness. He was a prisoner in the Bastille in 1756, who made friends with the rats in his cell, throwing them scraps of bread with his chained hands. "Soon, whenever dinner was brought in, Latude called his family. The male rat would come immediately, the female more timidly. Soon appeared a third rat, very familiar and sociable, who no sooner felt at home than he proceeded to introduce seven others. At the end of a fortnight the family consisted of ten large rats, and subsequently of their progeny. They would eat off a plate that their human friend provided for them, and liked to have their necks scratched, but he was never suffered to touch one on the back. He gave them all names to which they learned to answer, and taught them tricks of various kinds. One of them, a female, was a remarkable jumper and very proud of her accomplishment."

If we take the time to see the natures of those around us, animals all, it is really quite wonderful; we don't have to like everyone . . .

—Marc Gripman, *Berkeley, California*

Other Topics

Dear *Turning Wheel*:

I appreciated Lawrence Di Stasi's article "zen walk," relating his pilgrimage to various California Zen centers. Last April I too undertook a certain pilgrimage, leaving

Tassajara Zen Mountain Center where I had lived for two years; on foot I headed some 200 miles north to what would be my next "home"—Green Gulch Farm.

I found especially interesting Lawrence's account of the difficulties of arranging a stay at the "prominent" (as he says) San Francisco City Zen Center, and his question—"who does receive just anyone?" My experience was, and my confidence is, that when you make yourself completely dependent on the goodwill of others for survival, as is the case with the penniless pilgrim, people respond—the whole universe responds or rises to meet you in some way that is wonderfully inclusive, although you may have to relinquish your ideas to see it, and even then . . .

Unfortunately institutions—and Zen institutions seem little different—inherently deter this natural response when it does not fit into the appropriate slot of charitable action as dictated by the rules of the institution. We are pretty inflexible when it comes to interacting with variable and changing circumstances. I did stay unannounced at the San Francisco City Center and gratefully so, though the freedom of my hosts to respond compassionately to my need was notably restricted in contrast to the overwhelming hospitality I received, also unannounced, at small tucked away places like Jikoji in the Santa Cruz mountains, a place clearly inhabited by individuals, not occupied by an institution.

A primary function of such walking pilgrimages, as I see it, is to awaken this spirit of boundless hospitality and create a certain intimacy, however temporary. But this rare meeting is dependent on the pilgrim being unannounced. That a complete stranger could be offered food and shelter is an even greater testament to the profound "interconnectedness" of us all. Walk on!

—Michael Dow, *Green Gulch Farm, California*

A different version of the following letter was also sent to the Western Buddhist Teachers' Conference held at Spirit Rock Center in early September of this year.

Dear *Turning Wheel*:

In past years we have heard meditation teachers discuss equal teaching opportunities for women, outreach to minority groups, and equal access for gays and lesbians. What we have not heard or seen mentioned since your Fall issue of 1990 is that physical access to Dharma facilities and programs continues to be denied in most Buddhist centers.

Whether this denial has been by design or default, all groups deserve the right to hear the Dharma. The concerns of the other groups listed in the above paragraph are important. However, only one group is excluded from participating in most Dharma events, retreats, and centers. Only one group is prevented from discussing its concerns because they are effectively denied access to the dialogue. And it is important to realize that *any* person at any time can become disabled through illness or injury.

We recognize some centers are attempting to make retreats and other practice opportunities available to people with disabilities. We applaud those efforts. We also sadly recognize the ignorance of most teachers as they continue to conduct retreats at inaccessible locations which do not provide access for persons with disabilities. We have also seen well-meaning yet uninformed efforts lead to frustration for those involved. One example is a center that built a wheelchair ramp into a zendo but never provided a wheelchair-accessible bathroom or guest room. This effectively makes it impossible for someone in a wheelchair to participate in the center's practice for more than a few hours. We hope you take the time to reflect on the difficulties a physically disabled person would have if they were new to meditation and attempting to participate at your Dharma center.

—Daniel Barnes and Stephen Cornell, Novato, California

Dear *Turning Wheel*:

I am writing to thank you for publishing Lance Fleming's letter in the Spring issue of *Turning Wheel*. My husband, Tom Cooper, and I have started a very rewarding correspondence with him. I believe that both sides are benefiting greatly from the exchange. Lance is an amazing man, who has found the strength to grow and change and begin a spiritual practice under the most strenuous circumstances. I feel very inspired by his courage.

Thank you again for opening the door to the beginning of our correspondence. I hope your journal will always be open-hearted to prison inmates.

—Claire Rithmer, Sebastopol, California

Dear *Turning Wheel*:

I am a long-time (30+ years) Buddhist who is also an amateur radio operator. There are worldwide "nets" (discussion groups) on the amateur radio ("ham") bands dealing with all sorts of (mostly trivial) topics from model railroading to yacht racing. However, there is no Dharma net. I am interested in helping to form an informal international Dharma discussion group. If any other *Turning Wheel* readers happen to be licensed "hams" and like the idea, please contact N5IOS.

—Bob Alderisio, El Prado, New Mexico

Dear *Turning Wheel*:

Hi! I've just gotta tell you how much I appreciate *Turning Wheel*. Never do I read it without a challenge or change. I especially love your honesty and way of expressing the simple questions that seem to be unanswerable. In other words, you tickle me. Thank you for being exactly what you are and where you are. *Turning Wheel* is a true blessing to me in my ignorance.

—Arthur A. Weathers, Wrightsville, Georgia

READINGS

World Parliament of Religions

Representatives of 125 religions met in Chicago during the last week of August 1993, in the second World Parliament of Religions (the first was 100 years ago). This year's gathering was attended by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Thich Nhat Hanh, and leaders of Christian, Hindu, Moslem, and Jewish organizations, as well as Rastafarians, Sikhs, Taoists, Jains, Mormons, a variety of neo-pagan groups, and many others.

The representatives of the largest religious groups as well as many smaller sects signed an unprecedented declaration of global ethics on September 4. The nine-page declaration calls on all people to live by a rule that respects all life, individuality and diversity so that every person is treated humanely. It condemns sexual discrimination and exploitation of the environment, and renounces violence as a means of settling differences. "We are interdependent," the declaration begins. "We must treat others as we wish others to treat us. . . . Religions are credible only when they eliminate those conflicts which spring from the religions themselves, dismantling mutual arrogance, mistrust, prejudice."

The agreement calls for "equal partnership between men and women," opposes "all forms of domination and abuse," and condemns "patriarchy," but says nothing about the numerous religions that refuse to ordain women as members of their clergy. Also notable is a clause deploring "sexual exploitation . . . as one of the worst forms of human degradation."

The document, primarily drafted by noted Roman Catholic theologian Hans Küng and refined over a three-year period, warns that unless humans are guided by a "minimal ethic," the future of the planet and the human race will be bleak.

Help Buddhist Women in Ladakh

The Mahabodhi International Meditation Center (MIMC) in Ladakh, a major project in Buddhist practice and education in South Asia, has issued an appeal to help build a nunnery and a Center for Lay Women as part of their facility.

The status of women has been low in traditional Ladakhi Buddhism, and there is now only one small nunnery in all of Ladakh. Women cannot be properly ordained. As traditional values break down under the impact of rapid modernization, fewer and fewer young women are choosing to become nuns. There is a real danger that women's involvement in Buddhist practice will soon be a thing of the past.

The MIMC has allocated a site and developed plans for building the nunnery and lay women's center. The nunnery will initially accommodate 25 women for a seven-year study program. In addition to elementary

secular education, there will be courses in Buddhist history and philosophy, comparative religion, Tibetan, Pali, Sanskrit and English.

The Center for Lay Women, which will adjoin the nunnery, will provide hostel facilities for Indian and foreign women who wish to study the dharma and practice meditation.

Having completed their studies, some of the nuns will help run the Mahabodhi Institute's research library, meditation center, and other facilities. Others will, it is hoped, work on improving the position of women in the villages, offering short dharma and meditation courses and establishing social welfare programs. In the long term, the MIMC hopes that their work will enable Ladakhi women to enjoy equal status within their religion.

The project is expected to run to approximately U.S. \$90,000, of which around \$9,000 has already been raised. Please help this project with donations, which can be made out as a check to "Mahabodhi Nunnery" and sent to: Mahabodhi Int'l Meditation Centre, P.O. Box 22, Leh, Ladakh 194101, India. For more information, contact Ven. Bhikkhu Sanghasena at the same address.

Tibetan Refugees Assailed by Flood & Drought

The Central Tibetan Relief Committee in Dharamsala, India reports that two Tibetan cluster settlements in Leh, Ladakh have been devastated by flood waters, while another Tibetan settlement, in Mysore, Southern India, has been struck by severe drought.

In one of the Ladakhi settlements, floods swept away 23 houses and part of the health clinic in July. The new housing site was also damaged. The other Ladakhi settlement suffered structural damage to almost every one of their 375 homes. Tibetan settlers in Ladakh are among the poorest of Tibetans in exile.

In Southern India, nearly half of the corn crop has already withered, and the drought continues. This corn is the mainstay of the settlement's economy.

Generous contributions are urgently needed, and can be sent to: Central Tibetan Relief Committee, Gangchen Kyishong, Dharamsala, Dist. Kangra, H.P. 176215, India. ♦

BPF seeks Nominations
for two vacancies
on its local (San Francisco Bay Area)
Board of Directors.

Please send nominations in writing to:

Margaret Howe
President, BPF Board
P.O. Box 4650
Berkeley, CA 94704

An Open Letter to Women Zen Students — **PREVENTING SEXUAL ABUSE**

by Les Kaye

Head teacher, Kannon Do Zen Center

This is an open letter to women (and their men friends) who are concerned about stories of sexual abuse in Zen communities. Please note that this article refers to sanghas where the teacher is male and the target of sexual abuse is a woman student. While sexual harassment can and does take place when a woman is in a position of power, or when the student is male, incidents involving a male teacher and female student are far more common.

I wonder if you were as surprised as I was when I first heard about sexual abuse in Zen communities in the U.S. And I wonder if you, too, were angry at the extent of this abuse as more and more incidents became known.

At first, I couldn't understand why these men, as spiritual teachers, would pursue sex with their female students. Didn't they know how potentially harmful it could be? I became aware of the magnitude of this problem three years ago, through some letters and a series of newspaper and magazine articles. Since then, I have been involved in exploring the results of two such incidents. The more I learned, the more upset I became. The anger has pretty much subsided, but I am still concerned. Now I have a better understanding of the motivations that lead to such abusive relationships and what can be done to prevent them.

If you are new to Zen practice and are not aware of these scandals, I think you should know that for the past ten years, a number of male Zen teachers—both Asian and Western—have been discovered to be sleeping with women in their practice communities. These intimate relationships have resulted in a great deal of pain, both for individual women as well as for their sanghas.

It is also important for you to know that the larger Zen community in America does not have a system of checks and balances to govern the behavior of a teacher. We do not have an organization similar to a professional association or a state agency that can investigate a complaint of harassment. So if you feel you have been abused or harmed, your only appeal is to your sangha.

When seeking a community, what can you do to prevent abuse? First of all, before joining a spiritual community, it is important for you to know yourself, to understand your own expectations. What do you want from your practice? If you feel any inclination for status, fame, or power that can be granted by the teacher, take it as a warning that you may be vulnerable. And if you feel excitement or deep emotion in your practice, try to recognize if it is for the teacher rather than for the practice itself.

You can use common sense and intuition; you can trust your own ethical judgment. If you observe an activity in your new community that does not feel ethically OK, you don't have to join in. And be skeptical if questionable behavior is justified as "good for your practice."

It is not easy for most people to be objective during the early, exciting days of practice, especially if you receive encouragement from a teacher whom you admire. So when you begin to practice, proceed slowly in your emotional investment in the teacher and the sangha. It can be painful to withdraw from a situation once you have committed yourself to it. So don't be too hasty to bet your spiritual life on one person; it's a good idea to take time to let enthusiasm cool down.

While staying aware of your feelings and motivations, you can watch the teacher's behavior. Does he treat men and women differently? When he makes a mistake, does he admit it and take responsibility or does he dismiss it by rationalization? Is he open to feedback and criticism?

Try to understand the teacher's leadership style. Does he control the sangha's activities or does he share power and encourage consensus? Does he favor an "in group" that supports and protects him or does he discourage it and encourage open communication instead?

There are other questions to ask yourself about the attitude and behavior of the sangha. Does it seem overly dependent on the teacher's opinion, reflected in an attitude that "He can do no wrong"? Is there a "conspiracy of silence" regarding questionable behavior? Is there an attitude of denial when disquieting things occur? Or is there a free and open exchange of ideas and feelings within the sangha? Are there informal peer groups in the community, especially among women, that allow experiences to be shared? Most important: is there a strong feeling that abuse of power will not be tolerated?

What are community members prepared to do to prevent abuses of power? Ask them. Does the community have a code of conduct or ethical statement concerning the behavior of teachers, officers, and others in positions of trust? Is there a procedure for dealing with alleged abuses? And has the sangha a provision to call upon advisors outside of the community, if necessary, to prevent a conflict of interest and avoid a "code of silence"?

Men students, as well as women, should be aware that a male teacher may have a tendency to see only men as his equals. So in a spiritual community involving both men and women, the men need to be women's allies, joining them in being watchful for situations that could possibly lead to abuses of power.

In the past year, there has been an increased awareness of the harm done by abusive behavior. Ongoing discussions have begun within and between Buddhist groups. It is an encouraging development that will be helpful in preventing future abuses of power. ♦

Les Kaye is head teacher at Kannon Do Zen Center in Mountain View, California.

Ecology Column —

RESTORING CULTURAL RELATIONS TO THE LAND

by Stephanie Kaza

"Opening to the East, receiving the gifts of the new day, offering our hearts to the warming sun. . . Opening to the South, receiving the joys of summer, of companionship, of the relaxed body and mind . . ." and on around the circle in the four directions, reaching into the earth and up to the sky, placing ourselves in the universe to begin the day.

With this invocation, environmental activists from across the U.S.—as well as a few from Canada and Russia—joined in synchrony for the morning Cherokee Dance of Peace. We had come to the Rancheria Creek/Navarro River watershed in northern California for two weeks to explore the cutting edges of the Deep Ecology movement. In a first-ever summer school for Applied Deep Ecology, faculty from wide-ranging disciplines—natural history, social action, eco-psychology, anthropology, philosophy—took up the question "How then shall we live?" Co-director Elizabeth Roberts called on us to be not only midwives to new forms of environmental living, but also hospice workers helping the old ways die. Joanna Macy encouraged us to "speak the pain" to free up blocked energy for critically needed world work. Naturalist Elan Shapiro sung out about the psychological complexities involved in removing Scotch broom to allow native plants to restore the hillsides.

What, you wonder, *is* Deep Ecology? At the opening seminar, one person said it was a calling; another spoke of it as collective journey. Bill Devall, author of a number of books on Deep Ecology, said it was *not* a new religion but rather a philosophy as well as a social movement. At the heart of Deep Ecology is a radical questioning of materialist, anthropocentric, resource-oriented views of the environment which are central to Western society. Buddhist principles of co-dependent arising and mindfulness practice are very compatible with and helpful to this deep questioning process. (A number of the faculty were practicing Buddhists.) Deep ecologists challenge species chauvinism, gender and race domination, and short-sighted liberal approaches to environmental reform.

At the summer school we explored one powerful and practical aspect of Deep Ecology work—bioregionalism. Freeman House, a native dweller of the Mattole River watershed, spoke eloquently of "inhabitory culture." Based on his twenty-year efforts to restore salmon to the heavily deforested watershed, he described success in

Continued on page 19

Education Column —

ROSES AND DAGGERS

by Patrick McMahon

Purchasing a beanie in a hat store recently, I notice on the checkout counter a tray of tattoo decals. In these last back-to-school weeks of summer, I'm open to portraits. In the mix of hearts and dragons there seemed to be something for me, something I'd put out of mind, now seeking image. I came upon one that arrested me, a rose twining about a dagger. I had to have it. It wasn't until I had it transferred to my shoulder that I understood the reason.

Late last spring I found myself locked out of my classroom. This was the latest move in a years-long dispute with the administration. We see the means and ends of education differently, and in the politics of power, I was losing. One night I received a phone call from the personnel office informing me that my teaching credential had elapsed, that a substitute teacher had been ordered for the next day. I was to return to my room to clear out personal belongings, and after that was to stay away "until you've rectified the situation." Later that night, when my heart had stopped pounding, I saw my mistake. In neglecting the paperwork aspect of my job, I had played right into my adversary's hands. This was the weak point for which they'd been waiting.

Under any circumstances I would have been upset, but with the year coming to an end I was wild with the prospect of not finishing it out with my students. But, forward! The next day I set my shoulder to the wheel of my dilemma, enough to see it was going to take time to get things moving. I returned to my classroom to tell my students what I could. As I was leaving, Uriel raised his hand: "I have something to tell *you*, Mr. McMahon." (Uriel is the boy of whom I wrote in my last column, who'd stolen a wad of money from me. We'd arranged for him to pay me back in roses.) Following his pointing finger, I spotted what in my preoccupation with my own drama I'd missed: a sumptuous spray of reds and pinks and yellows, in a gallon jar.

I took those roses home. In the coming week they confirmed again and again, even as they dropped their petals, that in the whole mess something was working. In any conflict, there was an alternative to blame and punishment, right and wrong. "One mistake after another," as Zen Master Suzuki Shunryu said about his own life. One recovery after another, I would hope for my own.

Uriel's roses helped me back into my room, with one week of school remaining. But where was he? "Uriel brought a knife to school," his classmates told me. "He was suspended." The story that emerged was that Uriel, a small and unpopular boy, was being systematically bullied by a bigger kid. Now this is the stuff of school life, and stuff I take seriously: I've put in place a conflict resolution council, in the safety of which these kinds of disputes can at least surface. But in my absence, and in the absence of a similar school-wide council, he'd been left to his own limited solutions.

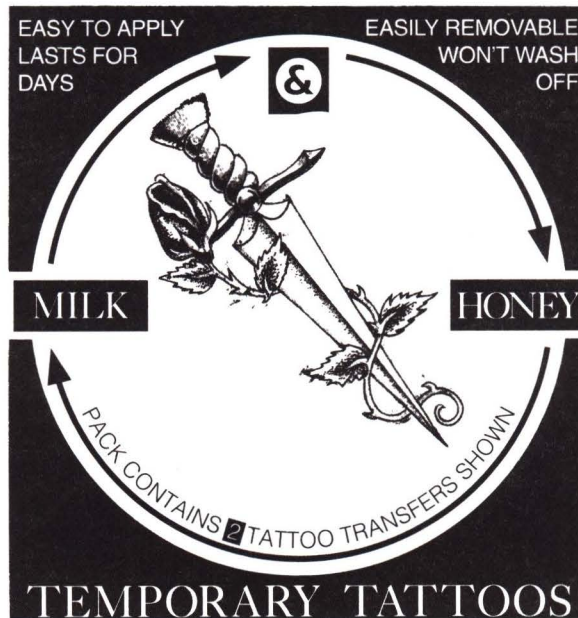
He was, indeed, suspended—for the rest of the year. As a kid, he hadn't had my resources. That was the only difference between the outcome of my suspension and his. Worse, the police had been called in. The administration had washed their hands of him, and I, overwhelmed in the tumult of an extraordinarily stressful year's end, let him slip through my fingers.

Fortunately he came back late one afternoon to retrieve a left behind toy. His black eyes, usually wide open to the next thing coming his way, were guarded. Yes, I

thought to myself, I let you down. Outwardly I thanked him again for the roses. "At least you and I are square now, aren't we?" I asked hopefully, hopelessly. He looked at me quickly, and rode off on his bike. I didn't have a chance to say, "You're a good kid, don't let anyone tell you different."

Now, with the summer vacation coming to a close, I'm carrying back to school the scar of that memory on my shoulder, as a rose wrapped around a dagger. Hey, weren't there two decals in that package? With any luck Uriel will be coming back to school, a fourth grader now. He'll love that tattoo. ♦

Patrick McMahon edits Teaching Circle: A Journal of the Larger Educator's Sangha. For more information, contact him at: 2311 Woolsey St., Apt. C, Berkeley, CA 94705.



IN MEMORIAM: BUDDHADASA, 1906 – 1993

by Kenneth Kraft

Ajahn Buddhadasa, who died this past summer at the age of 87, was the leading Buddhist teacher of his generation in Thailand. In time, he may also be recognized as one of the seminal Buddhist thinkers of this century. If socially engaged Buddhism has an unofficial “ancestral lineage,” Buddhadasa is surely part of it; he was one of the first in the modern era to apply time-honored Buddhist doctrines and practices to the problems of contemporary society.

In March 1990, I met Buddhadasa and listened to some of his early morning talks. The setting couldn't have been more picturesque: a clearing in a semi-tropical forest in southern Thailand, with flowering trees overhead and wandering chickens underfoot. There, sixty years ago, Buddhadasa had founded the monastery Suan Mokh (“Garden of Liberation”). Surrounding Buddhadasa in the pre-dawn haze was an audience of orange-robed Thai monks, local villagers, and Buddhists from many countries.

In simple language, Buddhadasa spoke forcefully about selfishness, calling it the root of all ills. “What would you do if you came upon a fruit tree in the forest, but the only fruit left was out of reach in the uppermost branches? There are people who would cut down the whole tree just to get a few pieces of fruit for themselves. In our own way, many of us are like that.”

This message is equally prominent in Buddhadasa's writings:

We do not need to speak of the Buddha, the dhamma, or the sangha, of any points of doctrine, or of the history of Buddhism. We have to forget about all those things, and begin our studies by examining the words “me” and “mine,” or rather the feeling in the heart which gives rise to these words. To truly understand me-and-mine leads to the extinction of suffering.

Buddhadasa's writings have been called “the largest corpus of thought ever published by a single Theravada thinker in the entire history of the tradition.” His works have been translated into Chinese, Indonesian, Lao, Tagalog, French, German, and English. Suan Mokh has developed into an international training cen-

ter without losing its original rustic simplicity; some Westerners have been practicing there for many years.

At nearly every stage of his career Buddhadasa aroused controversy. In his mid-20's he was recognized as a future leader of the Buddhist establishment in Bangkok, but he quit his influential post to pursue the solitary life of a forest monk. He did not hesitate to challenge the cherished views of villagers, politicians, fellow monks, or Buddhist scholars. In Thailand, belief in reincarnation is at the core of popular Buddhism, yet Buddhadasa declared:

As for the doctrine of reincarnation, it does not exist in Buddhist teachings, or rather it is not a truly Buddhist doctrine The Buddha's enlightenment was the discovery that, in truth, there is no such thing as a person or self.



Ajahn Buddhadasa and friend

Contrasting “social-ism” with “individual-ism,” Buddhadasa regarded Buddhism as inherently socialistic:

If we consider the Buddha's behavior toward all living beings, we see the highest form of socialism Buddhists need to become familiar with the socialism inherent in the Buddhist community, using it as a weapon against violent forms of socialism which promote one's own evil interests and force them on others.

In the past decade, Buddhadasa's thought has been introduced to Westerners by Thai activist Sulak Sivaraksa and by scholars Donald Swearer, Louis Gabaude, and Peter Jackson. The timing seems propitious, as Western Buddhists continue to explore the possibilities of Buddhist-inspired politics and social organization. The most comprehensive English language collection of Buddhadasa's writings is *Me and Mine: Selected Essays of Bhikku Buddhadasa*, edited by Donald Swearer and published by SUNY Press in 1989.

Buddhadasa's final days captured the attention of the nation. After he suffered a severe stroke, doctors and political leaders sought to prolong his life artificially. But Buddhadasa's disciples, citing their master's expressed wishes, enabled him to die naturally in his beloved Garden of Liberation. ♦

Kenneth Kraft teaches Asian religions at Lehigh University and currently serves on the national board of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship.

Engaged Lives

What is a socially engaged Buddhist?

I was “engaged” with the world long before I learned about Buddhism. When I was eight years old and my stepfather went away to war, I organized my Brownie Scout troop to make scarves for the cold soldiers in Korea. I was a little peace activist, sitting there knitting.

Ever since, I’ve tried to change the world, or save it, not questioning much if I really could do that. I “fought for peace” for a long time, and in my work on death row I’ve tried to be a friend to the friendless and to forgive the unforgivable.

I never, ever, sat down. Finally, at age 44, I ran into Buddhism and took a seat. It was quickly apparent to me that I’d been very busy on top of an inner volcano. As soon as I sat down, it blew up. I saw I wasn’t at peace, wasn’t my own friend, had never forgiven myself. I’ve walked on hot lava for a few years, after meeting myself so suddenly. I’m still an activist, of course, but I hope with more awareness of why and how I do things. It’s been a long engagement. I hope to get married in this lifetime, to myself.

—Melody Ermachild

Interacting out of interbeing, naturally and decidedly; turning one’s good intentions inside out; vulnerably “doing something about doing something”—or not doing something, if it’s best not done or left unsaid; self-and-world appropriate behaving; surprising oneself; getting a good night’s sleep.

—Rick Harlan

I spent four months of the past year sitting and practicing daily with a sangha friend who was dying. But this was easy: it was a “commitment” to “do good” in a particular, known situation. Perhaps it was practice for what I believe to be truly engaged Buddhism—the ability to respond with lovingkindness to a friend who is *not* in such dire need, who ruffles my fur for no apparent reason. When I am able to respond to these day-to-day things with equanimity, then I will consider that I have become an engaged Buddhist.

—Sydney Vilen

It means awakening to the ways we African Americans have been conditioned to participate in our own oppression—and then uprooting them.

—Lewis Aframi

Engaged Buddhism is for me a gut-level response. Thich Nhat Hanh has said that the Vietnam War did not happen just to the Vietnamese; it happened to everyone. Sometimes when I see or learn about others’ suffering I feel that it’s happening to me too.

A few years ago I saw the movie “Romero,” which is about the painful oppression of people in El Salvador. This set off an explosion inside me which led me to do work in support of Central American refugees. And, closer to home, it hurts me to

see people sleeping on cement sidewalks. This feeling of non-separation leads me to the question, “How can I help?”

—Sheridan Adams

I first learned zazen from Skip, a Vietnam War protester who had been incarcerated in solitary confinement. He would sit in his cell and the other prisoners would sit in solidarity on the exercise grounds. So I always have framed sitting as a solid, calm obstacle to the juggernaut of war and was later surprised to find that others felt it was a way to get *out* of the world.

—Judy Gilbert

Engagement is interesting practice; we surrender to situations, give up manipulating them, give up social programs. We mix our sanity with theirs. We open to chaos, we commit to it, we even marry chaos. Through it all, we practice keeping our dignity and humor, and always our tender hearts. What else is there?

—Judith Simmer-Brown

I am engaged, and I’m inspired by Buddhist teachings, but I don’t want to limit myself with the label “Buddhist.” The greatest inspiration I receive from Buddhism is that every little thing we do makes a change. And whatever we do makes our social situation better or worse.

—Kaz Tanahashi

Being an engaged Buddhist means choosing livelihood, friends, and political activities that nourish my spiritual practice.

—Lily Roselyn

Engaged Buddhism co-arises with insight into the radical interconnectedness—the “not-separateness” of all things. Because we are not separate from our world, our hearts call us to reduce what suffering we can. We begin to see that harmony with nature is related to local community—is related to local economy—is related to appropriate technology—is related to human scale and pace of life—is related to sharing resources—is related to mental health, and on and on. When we begin to see the many win-win solutions that are possible, action becomes critical to spiritual practice!

—Jeff Scannell

It stirs my heart to work as an engaged Buddhist. At the same time that I’m offering a service, I’m growing in my practice of mindfulness and compassion, which in turn increases my ability to offer that service.

—Amy Krantz

Being an engaged Buddhist is to *try* to be as aware and conscious as I can in every situation and encounter in my life.

—Gail Deutsch



Continued on page 19

This issue of *Turning Wheel* celebrates the variety of ways that socially engaged Buddhism manifests in its budding Western form. We begin with some visions and experiments from the front lines: the words of engaged Buddhists practicing here in the U.S.

Editor's note: Thanks to everyone who contributed to this special section at the last minute. Apologies to those whose faxes and phone calls didn't reach me in time (and I heard the fax line ring often—but half the time no fax materialized!) — DC

Experiments in engaged Buddhism: What worked for you?

I started Dieters Feed the Hungry to help resolve a glaring paradox concerning food: those who struggle with too much to eat and those who struggle with too little. In the midst of our food-obsessed culture, it's painful to acknowledge that 19 million people—mostly women and children—cannot meet their daily or monthly nutritional needs. The DFTH motto is: If you can choose what to eat, you can help those who can't.

I gathered together a group of health- and nutrition-minded women and brainstormed how we could nourish others in personally satisfying ways. Some people serve casseroles to hungry pregnant women, others donate money otherwise spent on snacks like candy bars; others work in soup kitchens and food give-away programs. What's important is that we each find ways to link our own eating habits with acts of generosity and giving.

—Ronna Kabatznick

Although it may seem presumptuous to think of Westerners helping Buddhist monks learn about Buddhism, many Cambodian Khmer monks have little more than an elementary school education, and—lacking training in Pali, dhamma, and vinaya—are ill-prepared to resume their role as moral and spiritual guides (vitaly important if the Khmer are to overcome decades of conflict and renew their society). Monks have always acted as leaders in village communities, but only a small number of these traditionally trained monks survived the genocide.

The Khmer-Buddhist Educational Assistance Project (KEAP) was founded in 1988 to aid Cambodian Buddhism, and has made videotapes of monk novice training for the Khmer monks; it has also given them Buddhist texts. Most of KEAP's work is now being turned over to the Khmer, and hopefully it will soon have no purpose for existing at all.

—Jamie Hubbard

I just got back from a global anti-nuclear alliance meeting in Kazakhstan. The ecology there is trashed from the effects of Soviet and Chinese atomic testing, chemical factories exploding, and the Aral Sea drying up. We went to a village where no Americans had ever been and where the folks were hopeless. We asked questions, shared how to work in small teams to map their valleys, and touched on how to have a different relationship to their land, to each other and to time.

The mayor gave a speech at the end of our visit, saying he and the village had gone through a spiritual transformation. All we did was walk around, smile, and look deeply at their situation—and now they have hope and fresh ways to approach restoring their land and culture.

—Judy Gilbert

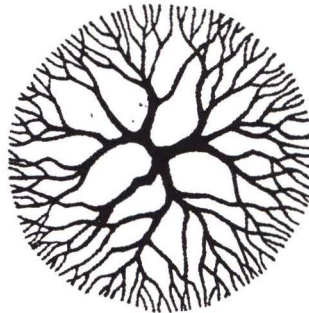
I have a small investment in a "socially conscious" alternative energy mutual fund. My intention is to encourage alternative energy development and heal the planet, not to make money.

—Diane Marks

A few months ago I was eating dinner with some friends at a small Indian restaurant. A homeless man entered the restaurant, making an impassioned plea for some help. He said he had a bipolar disorder and was in an intense manic phase. A very disturbing incident had just occurred where he had tried to explain this to some people next door to the restaurant, and they had called the police.

I sensed that in order to calm down he needed someone to just listen to him. The owners of the restaurant seemed frightened and at a loss for what to do. I decided to take a risk: I asked him if he would take a walk with me and tell me what had happened. He settled down as soon as he realized I understood what he was trying to get across. Responding in small ways to what is needed in the moment is, to me, a very meaningful aspect of engaged Buddhism.

—Sheridan Adams



Along with Marlena Willis and the Interracial Buddhist Council, I helped start a sitting group for people of color. The point was to cast a broad net, not limiting the group to Buddhists of a particular tradition—or even,

for that matter, to practicing Buddhists. The group provides much needed support to those of us who sometimes have difficulty working with European American teachers or practicing in predominantly white centers. We've also co-sponsored—with Insight Meditation West—one-day retreats that have served to encourage teachers of color, and we have begun to reach out to Asian American and immigrant communities.

—Lewis Aframi

At Naropa Institute, we seem to have the most to contribute to the charnel grounds of our society: working with the homeless, the aged in nursing homes, and psychotics in mental health settings. What works best is the practice of "basic attendance," which is just being with another person, letting in their pain and confusion, and sharing our fearlessness. It's just basic sitting practice applied to life situations.

—Judith Simmer-Brown

I have incorporated the use of the Mindfulness Bell in many of the meetings, discussions and groups I regularly attend. I especially like to use the bell when I am leading or facilitating groups. As a result, these meetings have been described as calming, productive, and having deeper meaning.

—Kathy A. Whitwer

Continued on page 18

Experiments in engaged Buddhism: What worked for you? (continued from page 17)

I learned a lot from being constantly defeated in my struggle against nuclear arms in the early 1980s. Now, with the end of the Cold War, our dream is being actualized. This makes me understand that at every stage of our defeat, we were actually turning the situation around. "Being defeated" is really a superficial view. As long as we keep doing little things, we are in the process of winning.

An example: members of San Francisco Zen Center used to hold a weekly anti-nuclear vigil in downtown San Francisco. Many people in business suits would completely ignore us, which was a very humiliating experience. The number of attendants at the vigils got smaller and smaller—sometimes it was only me and one other person. So we decided to make our activities more enjoyable, and we started what we called "anti-nuclear sight-seeing." We held vigils at Castro St., Fisherman's Wharf, Chinatown—tourist attractions. (Finally, after our sense of defeat became full and complete, we gave up vigils altogether.)

—Kaz Tanahashi

At the Los Alamos Study Group in Santa Fe, we are working to delegitimize nuclear weapons. But it's not the plans, the strategies, the things that have been most important in our political work. It's ourselves—our character, or lack thereof—that has been the deciding factor. In the long run, circumstances are mutable and character is all that counts. Change seems to occur when people and institutions can pivot on something, and that something needs to be trustworthy, something mutual and deep. But short-term visible success is not all that's important, and will not always occur.

This is a seed time for our culture, and whatever follows will depend upon our fidelity to what is important, on the degree to which we have personalized our vision of what it means to be human and live it in the public realm.

—Greg Mello

The BPF Seattle Chapter made a 3 x 5 foot "witnessing banner," with the BPF name and logo (hand holding a flower). During demonstrations, pickets, memorials and what have you, our banner is sometimes in-the-midst, and sometimes simply witnessing both the injustice and the acrimony from the sidelines. The banner is a take-a-breath reminder, a place of information and equilibrium; it offers refuge for the disaffected.

We're also a listening post. During the Judge Thomas confirmation hearing protest, we got people coming up to us and saying, "You know, I feel kind of uncomfortable over there, with all that hate going toward Justice Thomas." Other people talked to us about the sexual harassment going on at their workplaces.

Just by its existence, the banner reminds us to go places and make a statement, without evangelizing or throwing more aversion fuel in the fire.

—Rick Harlan

I love to sleep and am really grateful for my warm blankets. So I decided to buy a lot of blankets and give them to organizations in my city that provide safe places for people to sleep during the winter. I went to thrift stores and was surprised to find that they

didn't have blankets. I suspected this was because people tend to hoard old or unused blankets rather than give them away.

I borrowed some big barrels from our local food bank and posted signs on them asking people to donate clean blankets and sleeping bags. I named the charities and described how they help people during the winter. I left the barrels at my work and at my Zen center. Many people donated blankets and sleeping bags and the charities were really happy to get them.

—Diane Solomon

I put together a book of first-person stories called *Visible and Vulnerable: The People We See on Berkeley Streets*; homeless people sell it for \$5 a copy as a source of income. The book encourages people on the streets to see that their lives have dignity and worth. For readers, it gives the details of specific lives, the point being to break down prejudice and stereotypes, so people can find their own way of engaging without marginalizing homeless people as the Other.

In creating this book, I stood as a two-way mirror, allowing for communication across what had been a very rigid boundary and was now a place of connection. Compassion was the heart and goal of this project.

—Judith Stronach

East Bay BPF had a bake sale to raise money for Bosnia; the funds were donated to the human rights organization MADRE, because of its commitment to nonviolent solutions to the conflict there, and because they work with victims on both sides, counseling women who had been raped. Internationally, MADRE is pressing the UN to declare that under the Geneva Convention rape is a war crime.

The bake sale had another purpose: to let people know that atrocities are being committed, that something is being done, and that we *can* do something. We want to empower people to take action, and to let them see the presence of not just BPF, but also Buddhism as a force for social change.

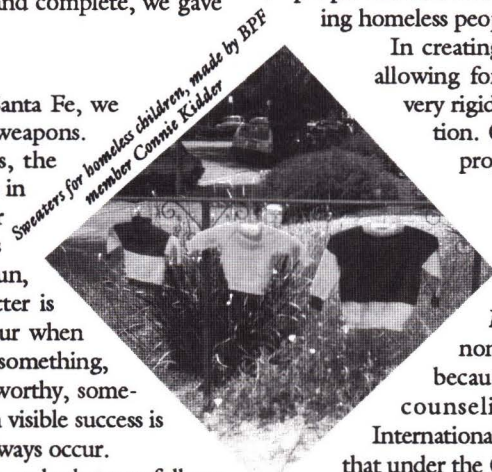
—Margo Tyndall

The Santa Cruz City Schools Homeschoolers has a core group of young people who have been drawing, writing, and getting involved in community service for the past two years; "Calling the Frogs Back" is a new performance piece we're developing.

The rains had returned to our area after a long drought, and along with them the sound of the frogs in the ravine by my house. But we learned that the frogs are dying mysteriously. What would it be like to never hear their sounds again, to never have a chance to know frogs? We wanted to call the frogs back . . . to call ourselves back to our own wilderness and not forget our frog-ness. Caring for the frogs is caring for some part of ourselves, and all the humor and magic the frogs carry for us.

The story of the frogs unfolded and so did the idea for our set: an ancient forest with doors that open to our audience, doors they can step through to learn about the forest's elements, its wild place, its wounds. The frogs will act as a chorus (a device used in Greek drama), giving voice to conscience and humor in a running commentary throughout the performance.

—Nanda Carrant



Sweaters for homeless children, made by BPF member Connie Kildner

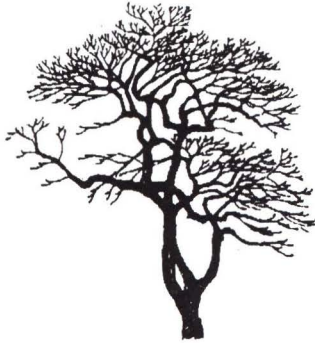
What is a socially engaged Buddhist? (continued from page 16)

The practice of engaged Buddhism means making myself available. Wherever I can fit a volunteer job into my life or be of help to someone, I do it—whether it's serving as my Zen center's treasurer, helping a charity write a request for funding, or giving somebody a ride somewhere. It's a lonely practice because our society doesn't really support or encourage this effort. And the engaged Buddhist role models that are held up to us as examples are doing huge things, whereas the things I am able to do are very small and ordinary. The important thing for me to remember is to "just do it," in a not-hesitating manner, without thinking about the results.

I have a little note that I keep near my meditation cushion, where I can see it every day. It says, "no matter how small it is, there is always something I can do."

—Diane Solomon

Engaged Buddhism means trying to be honest and open in family, community, and workplace. I work in a Fortune 500 company where there is intense pressure and a somewhat frantic and frenetic tone. I try to be, what Thich Nhat Han has called a "calm voice." But it is very difficult not to be swept up in the energy and emotion of the workplace and one's work group. A big question for me is (and it's



an open question): How can I be engaged and aware of what's right in front of me in the workplace and in the community?

—Bill Anderson

Thich Nhat Hanh says something like: "Engaged Buddhism is nothing special. Just practice Buddhism in your family and in your community, that is all."

Engagement means just to be mindful, to be present, in all our situations "off the cushion" with whatever the present moment brings. When I am able to do that, I can be moved to act with compassion in response to suffering. We just need to be sure we have some balance in our experience. We usually get so wrapped up in our "own" suffering that it takes some effort to be sure we remain open to the suffering of others. Of course, it's also possible to pay too much attention to suffering in the family or society and get off balance, not take care of ourselves, burn out. Finding this balance over and over is the Right Effort of engagement.

—Jim Austin

The term "engaged Buddhist" is redundant. But doesn't it imply a radical personal and practical fidelity to our basic humanity? It also suggests a community-based resistance to the life of bad faith that is offered by our so-called culture. We abandon what is false and offer our lives, our witness, in a kind of *takahatsu*. Our religious, social, and political life coincide.

—Greg Mello

An engaged Buddhist is one who's soon to be married.

—Patrick McMahon

The question is: How can engaged Buddhists from different traditions come together to work on different social issues? In my experience, it seems everyone has their own issue, so the challenge is finding ways to come together as an engaged *community*.

—Bud Reiter-Lavery

Hey you, yes, you . . . look me in the eyes. What is it that you and I, in our heart of hearts, really know that we ought to do here in this situation?

—Doug Codiga ♦

Ecology Column (cont'd from page 13)

community-building terms. For culture to include the environment in a meaningful way, he said, it must actually rise out of place—a specific place with specific non-human inhabitants and land forms. Inhabitory culture reflects the relationships of humans to non-human residents, in all their magical and material aspects. Freeman found that his experience with ranchers, activists, agency biologists, and schoolchildren created interest in regional self-reliance and self-determination. This practice of living in place is radical for our times, given the fragmented nature of Western society's relationship to the environment. The bioregional movement encourages identification with place, and naming that place according to its natural ecology and biology—for example, the Shasta bioregion, the North Coast, the Hudson River Valley.

But this is only part of the story. Today we live in a global economy with vast webs of complicated and potentially dangerous technology infiltrating the culture. How do we live locally but sustain the planet globally? Deep Ecology activist Randy Hayes, of Rainforest Action Network, dared us to come up with a 500-year plan for the Earth. What a mind-boggler! We compared ratios of cars to cows, bicycles to people; we tried to imagine achieving energy efficiency and ecological literacy in 100 years or less. And why not? Why not pass on your best ecological thinking to the next generation so they can keep going with this vital work? The point was to imagine a real time when we are living sanely and intelligently as diverse cultures in a healing world. So consider that: What is *your* vision for the next 500 years? Bring it along to the next Deep Ecology Summer School—August 1994, same time same place. I'll be there, and I'll be curious to see what you've dreamed up. ♦

For information about next year's Deep Ecology Summer School (July 30 – August 13, 1994), write: Institute for Deep Ecology Education, Box 2290, Boulder, CO 80302. Tel: 303/939-8398.

A Response to Rape Survivors in the Former Yugoslavia —

Bundles of Love: Birth of a Social Change Project

by Tova Green

In early 1993, stories broke in the U.S. media about the systematic rape of thousands of women in the former Yugoslavia. This is the account of one response, carried out by an informal network of friends.

This is the story of how a simple idea became a project that elicited the support of thousands of people in the U.S. and Australia. We still don't know how it will turn out, but we hope the results will be as full of goodwill and love as the impulse that created the idea.

When she heard about the rapes of women in Bosnia, BPF member Fran Peavey was horrified. These rapes were not the random acts of violence every war engenders; they were a systematic practice of humiliating thousands of women, often performed in public with neighbors watching, or in rape camps where women were raped by many soldiers, over and over. Some of the women were killed. Many who survived could never return home. Some had already been separated from their husbands and children and forced to leave their homes, which had been pillaged. How could any of us read of this horror and not ache with these women?

Fran asked herself, day after day, what she could do to help this situation. Finally an answer emerged. She would ask her friends to make bundles containing women's things, like nice scarves, embroidered pillow slips and handkerchiefs, shampoo, soaps, cosmetics—gifts that might enable the women of Bosnia who received them to feel support and connection. Fran didn't know at first whether this was a good idea. She told me about it, and because I was preoccupied with other things my response was lukewarm. Friends responded more positively to Fran's idea, but it wasn't until she went to hear two women from the former Yugoslavia speak that Fran knew her idea was a good one. She managed to speak to the two women alone. As she told them of her idea she saw tears in the eyes of these women. They said, "What a lovely idea."

Fran sent a letter to friends on her personal mailing list—67 letters in all. At the same time, our Australian friend, Carol Perry, who had been visiting us, carried our greetings to twelve of our Australian friends with Fran's letter enclosed. Her letter described her feelings about the rapes, her concern for the women, and directions on how to prepare and wrap the bundles. We asked a friend with an office in San Francisco to receive the packages for us because we knew we would be away for a month. Fran encouraged those who received the letters to copy them and, if they were moved to do so, send them to others.

Fran expected a 5–10% response to her letter, and thought that she and I could carry the packages in inexpensive plastic suitcases, probably two each. She had been asked to do some work in Romania and thought we could drop the packages off on our way; the work in Romania would pay our fares.

We got an inkling of the power of Fran's idea when, in June, we heard from our friend Norma Cordell. She had spread the letter within her church and graduate school. She had 400 bundles to deliver. We went away for about 10 days in June and on our return found over 30 messages on our answering machine with questions about the project. Women and men were getting together with colleagues at work, with friends, with church groups, to make bundles. Calls came from Pennsylvania, Florida, Washington. Women from

computer companies had gotten the letter on electronic mail and were making bundles on their lunch breaks.

Fran left for New Zealand at the end of June. I was to book our plane tickets and arrange for shipping the bundles; by this time we realized we couldn't carry them as excess baggage. I got a call from our friend Gail saying her office was flooded with bundles; more and more were coming every day. I made a trip to the office and was dismayed when I saw the volume—enough to fill the back of a pickup truck at least! When I called the travel agent to talk about flights, I realized I didn't know where we were going. What was the



Tova Green, Carol Perry, and Fran Peavey packing up bundles

Continued on page 23

A Response to Rape Survivors and Sex Workers in Burma and Thailand —

Waking from the Nightmare: Village Women Take Action

by Margaret Howe

While on a recent delegation to Thailand and Burma representing the Buddhist Peace Fellowship, we focused on the particular forms of suffering faced by the women there. What I learned in Southeast Asia resonated with the kinds of problems I see in my work here in the U.S. with Planned Parenthood: lack of access to health care and economic choice for low-income women, violence, and—because I work with high-risk teenagers—teen sexuality, pregnancy, and gang involvement. The human rights questions are not the same for Asian and American women, but the answers are intertwined; and while women's sufferings in both places are immense and difficult to look at with a sustained gaze, it is essential to bear in mind that there is always a response—in our lives, our practice, our actions. This article begins by describing the reality of the situation in Burma and Thailand, and ends with some projects that address the need there, as well as some considerations and possibilities for action here in the U.S.

It is a routine and well-documented practice for the Burmese army to take men and (sometimes pregnant) women from the local villages to act as porters of food and ammunition, and even as human mine-sweepers, clearing the way with their bodies for the troops. These slave workers receive a handful of rice per day, are often brutally beaten for not keeping up, easily succumb to malaria and dysentery, and are left to die when injured in the line of duty.

Women are especially brutalized by the army; soldiers often use the girls and women at night for their sexual pleasure. They are expected to haul heavy loads the next day after a sleepless night of repeated rapings. Some women are kept for weeks in this way, listening to each other's screams in the forest all night long. Their nightmare ends when they are either ransomed back to their villages, left in the forests, or escape towards home or to refugee camps on the border. Amnesty International has documented hundreds of thousands of villagers who have been used as porters and mine-sweepers, but no figures specifically address the brutality towards women. But with each refugee who comes to the borders of Thailand, new stories filter in and a pattern of systematic violence takes form.

Rape is also used as a tactic to force a village to comply with the army's demands. Women are raped, often as their children and husbands watch. Many women become pregnant, and if they make it back to their village, often have to bear shame and rejection by their people. Some are never seen again.

Perhaps more insidious than the army's violence are

the stark economic conditions that force girls and women into compromising jobs in the sex industry. Thus the women lucky enough to avoid the army's abuse often find themselves doomed to a similar fate—they are lured, sold or tricked into the flesh trade so widespread in Thailand. Some are ethnic women fleeing into the refugee camps in Thailand. Others come across from the borderlands in search of economic opportunities, and still others are lured to "good paying jobs" inside Thailand and unknowingly sold into the industry by crafty agents working the poor towns. These girls either go willingly to their unknown fate or are sold by their parents who do not have a clear idea of the nature of the work. Girls are typically sold for U.S. \$600 – 800. The agents prey on families who



Girls at Daughter's Education Project, Thailand

have little hope of making ends meet in Burma's dismal economy and tell of great fortunes that can be made just across the border.

It is estimated that there have been 40,000 Burmese women and children sold into Thailand's sex industry (UNICEF report, 1992), with estimates of the total number of prostitutes or sex workers in Thailand ranging from 500,000 – 800,000. Often girls go into the business as young as 12 years old. Depending on whether their status is "voluntary" or slave labor, some receive up to 40% of their wages and others receive nothing. It is not uncommon for them to service 5–10 men a night. We can call these girls sex workers, but their young age and lack of choice suggest that we view them as rape victims. Some of the men from our group went to a brothel where they were offered 14-year-old girls for \$12.

Once they have entered the industry, the Burmese sex workers are at the mercy of the brothel owner, and have no recourse because of their illegal status in Thailand. The owners beat them, limit their food and

wages, and often keep them locked in their rooms. Access to medical treatment, AIDS education, and condoms are almost nonexistent for them. The possibility of living a normal family life in the future is virtually nil.

If these girls try to escape, they can be severely beaten upon forced return to the brothel, repatriated to Burma or put into Thai detention centers. The sex trade industry in Thailand is woven into the fabric of Thai society and well connected with the authorities—the police can be most helpful in making sure a girl gets back to her owner. Who are the men who frequent these brothels? Many are Thai or Burmese locals. International customers range from tourists (from Japan, Germany and other countries) traveling on sex tours (set up explicitly to enjoy Thailand's night life) to regular tourists and the U.S. military.

There is another aspect of this issue which raises the stakes and the suffering of the Burmese and Thai sex workers. Even more than their counterparts in the U.S., these women are at exceptionally high risk of becoming infected with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. Chiang Mai, the second largest city in Thailand where there are over 10,000 ethnic Burmese working in brothels, has alarming numbers of infected women. In some brothels the rate was found to range from 16% – 72% infected. For those working over a year in the business, 70% were HIV-positive (*Far Eastern Economic Review*). While the trend among international visitors is to wear condoms, most locals do not.

Coming from small villages in Burma, the women have no prior knowledge or experience of AIDS. If found to be positive, they can be forcibly repatriated. There are alleged but unconfirmed reports of HIV-positive women being killed upon return to Burma. There are other reports of disappearances, detainments, and forced labor of girls with the virus.

This tragic side of the story is not only disastrous for the women themselves, but portends wider calamity because of the rapid spread of the virus in Burma and Thailand. Despite denial by the local authorities, the World Health Organization places Thailand and Burma among the top countries in the growth of the AIDS crisis in Asia.

We visited several grassroots projects [*addresses follow the end of this article; donations are gratefully accepted*] which are bringing the plight of these women into awareness and developing creative ways to help them. The Daughter's Education Project has made a video about AIDS to educate villagers, and works to reeducate and empower young girls. In our conversations with some of the girls there, they spoke articulately of the dangers and realities of prostitution and drug use, and of their personal hopes and dreams for the future. With this project's help they hope to become teachers and social workers, and work to bring change to their villages. I couldn't help envisioning a

network of radical schools such as these in the U.S. and what their potential impact on our youth would be.

A budding Karenni women's organization will be working along the Thai-Burma border with the women in the displaced villages and refugee camps and teaching human rights, among other things. We met with Esther, its founder, a dedicated Karenni woman who began setting up schools in the jungle in 1976.

Many people ask how these things can occur in Buddhist countries. How can Thailand host such a massive trade in bodies and Burma birth this brutal junta which is terrorizing its own people? How can men go to temple on Sunday and frequent the sex workers on Saturday night? What do these contradictions imply about Buddhism and how does this relate to the Buddhism we practice here? And maybe most important, how can our Buddhist practice inform our response to these horrors?

Here it seems helpful to examine the seeds of hatred and violence in our own lives and society. Although our daily lives might conceal the impact of our own actions, lifestyle, and decisions, would they stand up to such close scrutiny? For example, at what point do we stop ourselves from "speaking truth to power" to protect our own interests? How does concern for our own financial and physical security affect decisions in a way that might compromise our ideals of Right Action? How much do we acknowledge and address the violence against women in our *own* countries—family violence, sexual abuse, and rape? What are the forces that allow us *not* to see? When we hold power in a situation, what are the influences which cause us to use that power less than carefully?

It was sobering to come home to the teens I work with. I am supposed to be teaching them about responsible choices, self respect, and to question the impact of gender roles on their decisions and behaviors. At Juvenile Hall I meet two sisters, 13 and 16, in for a drive-by shooting. They are both sexually active. I flash back to the girls I met at the Daughter's Education Project and see them reflected in these girls' faces. I listen to them and try to speak to the questions they don't ask. If they lived in Burma they might already be sex workers, with no control over their lives or sexuality. I wonder how much control they have here. ♦

Margaret Howe is president of the BPF Board. She and her partner would like to start or join a community house of Buddhist social activists. If interested, leave a message at the BPF office.

Daughters Education Project
P.O. Box 10
Mae Sai, Chiang Rai 57130, Thailand

Karreni Women's Organization
c/o Burmese Relief Center
P.O. Box 48 Chiang Mai University
Chiang Mai, 50002, Thailand

Bundles of Love (Cont'd from page 20)

nearest city in Europe to Yugoslavia? How would we find the women in the camps and women's centers? How would we get all the boxes there?

Luckily, Barbara Hazard called to ask me how I was and heard the desperation in my voice when I told her I was overwhelmed by the project. She offered to spend two hours helping me. She first listened to my feelings and then helped me strategize. She had used a shipping company to send an art exhibit to St. Petersburg, and suggested that we consider sending the bundles by sea instead of air—much cheaper. She had brought her atlas; it looked like Vienna was a likely destination.

Things began to fall into place. I phoned a woman in New York who had just returned from Zagreb. She gave me the names of several people there who had helped her. I booked our tickets. From that moment on, I adopted the project as mine, as well as Fran's, and began to take an active role in shaping it.

Fran had given me the name of a woman in Chicago who was organizing United States participants for a peace camp in Sarajevo. She gave me names of others in Europe who might be able to help us. I got the names of several organizations in Croatia and wrote a letter describing our project. An Oakland woman who grew up in Yugoslavia translated the letter into Serbo-Croatian. With every phone call, I became aware of the invisible web of support for the women of Bosnia, the eagerness of people to help them.

Fran and I are part of an affinity group, nine women in all. The group had agreed to get all the bundles in Gail's office into shipping cartons while we were in Australia. I did all I could to find out about the size of the cartons, where to buy them, and estimate the number we'd need. Then it was time for me to leave for Australia, and I had to let go and trust that our friends would follow through. They did, superbly.

In Australia, Carol's house and verandah were full of packages. Each day she got a carload from the tiny village post office. The woman in the mailroom, Pauline, started worrying about how Carol would get them to Yugoslavia. Carol would tell her, "That's Fran and

Tova's problem." But before long, Carol decided she *did* want to make the trip to Yugoslavia, too, and she began to raise funds for her journey.

At the end of July we had a packing day at Carol's house. About eight of our friends took part. We opened the boxes and mailbags which had arrived from many parts of Australia, read some of the messages of love and caring, and repacked the bundles in sturdy cartons. Three hours later we had 13 boxes containing nearly 1400 bundles, weighing 347 kilograms.

The packing day in Gail's office in San Francisco occurred on the same Sunday as our day at Carol's in Australia. We phoned our affinity group and found that they had packed 60 cartons, five truckloads!

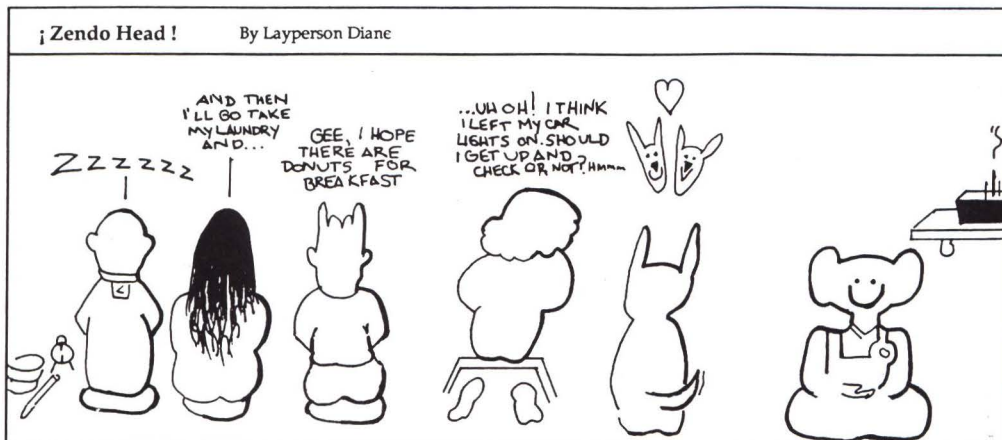
Fran, Carol and I had several meetings while we were in Australia to talk about our goals for the project, our visions about how we'll work together, our fears, and lots of logistics. I think we will work well as a team. We are all good listeners, know one another well, have a lot of practical skills, and can laugh together.

In two workshops Fran and I have co-led on "Finding Our Small Part in History," we used this story to illustrate some of the elements of a social change project. Participants brainstormed some of these elements and then, in small groups, looked at their own ideas or projects to see how the elements were relevant to their work.

These elements include: responding to a painful situation in the world and wanting to do something about it; asking what can be done and waiting for an answer; getting an idea and checking it out with friends and with people affected by the situation; asking for support; finding something concrete and easy to do; adapting to changing circumstances.

This is only the first chapter of this story. In six weeks we will depart for Vienna. We plan to deliver the packages ourselves, and to learn about some of the other needs of the women, children, and families displaced by this war. We look forward to telling you the next chapter of the story upon our return. ♦

Tova Green is a social worker and social change worker living in Oakland, California. She has practiced Vipassana since 1976 and has been a Jew all her life.



Ringling out against fascism —

This Very Bell

by Denise Caignon

The child of socially engaged parents, Nicola Geiger was born in 1920 in Germany. As an adolescent and young adult, she witnessed Germany's transition from a place and time of great cultural and political openness to the rise of the Third Reich; the events of this time instilled in her a life-long commitment to social justice and anti-fascism. In this interview, Nicola focuses on important events in her life—particularly her childhood and youth—that influenced her to become the peace activist and mediator she is and has been throughout her life.

Nicola is an extraordinarily lively person who laughs often and heartily. Our conversation was punctuated frequently by Nicola ringing the mindfulness bell shown in the photograph accompanying this article. These days, Nicola uses her bell to create rituals for birthdays, memorials, and weddings.

Nicola Geiger: I am a Buddhist but you know, at age 73, labels have no more meaning for me. You just *are*, your being *is*, you're simply in the world as you are in the world.

BPF: So at an earlier point in your life you identified more with the Buddhist label?

NG: Yes. Buddhism had such formative power on me. But before we get started, we have to ring the bell [rings bell]. Which I do every day—I even have the bell on my recorded phone message. The bell is so important to me. Even in my childhood it played a great part. My mother rang this bell while she was pregnant with me, and my father was sitting zazen while I was being born on our verandah, under the roses. After I was suckled on my mother's breast and was cleaned up and all lovely, my father took me and put me next to him on a meditation mat. So Buddhism was there from the moment I came into the world.

BPF: How did your dad get involved in Buddhism?

NG: People always think of Germany only in terms of the 12 years that Hitler was in power [laughs heartily]. This is so limiting. During the last century, many Germans translated Buddhist scriptures and Chinese

teachings—for example, German scholars did translations of the *I Ching*, so this knowledge was readily available in Germany. My father was a very socially engaged person. He did union organizing and strike work during the '20s, which was a very difficult time economically. He *always* sat down and meditated first. He explained to me that this was the centering he needed to overcome his ego, to prepare himself to move from the inner space, rather than from here [she points to her head] into an action. My whole life I've found this to be true—whatever I do as an activist is centered because I sit for an hour or two every morning, at 4 or 5 AM.



I remember my father sitting in the library, on his cushion, when I was three or four years old. I would go in and say, "Papa what're you doing? C'mon, let's play." He would say, "No, this is my time." "Well, what're you doing, what're you thinking?" He'd say, "Well, here's a little pillow for you, why don't you sit down and try it?" So I copied him. He never explained what to do, but it had a calming effect which was really amazing. I still remember the feeling of movement, of breath, in and out, in and out, and the feeling of my breath cleansing me. It really conditioned me. There was no abstractness about the way I experienced Buddhism. And the bell [rings the bell] was always rung in the morning and evening. It was also used on birthdays—all birthdays were rung in.

I cannot live without my bell [rings the bell]. Most people depend on coffee to wake up in the morning. I can't believe it! I've never depended on coffee to wake up. You

know, all of us are bells. Each of us has our own sound, and we tune that sound by how we are in the world. As I grew older, I began to understand that when you rang the bell [she rings the bell and pauses] that was meant to awaken you. What does it mean to be awakened? To be reminded of something. Of what? Of breathing. The wonder of it! Just to breathe and to know that the breath will cleanse my blood, be transformed and go out. You know, when I get out of bed in the morning,

I'm filled with wonder. God! Sleep! I think sleep is something so incredible.

BPF: It's such a strange thing, isn't it. We lie down and just go unconscious.

NG: It is a wonder. I just turned 73, and sleep is *still* such a wonder to me. And when I go to the toilet, I say thank you—simply for the total miracle of a body transforming. It is from an awareness of my body that I came to understand transformation and the value of discipline. The body is so consistent. To be consistent, to be disciplined, leads to awakening. Discipline means simply to embrace whatever comes your way. If one is faithful to it, that discipline produces a spontaneity.

BPF: So you are faithful to a sitting practice.

NG: Yes, to a centering.

BPF: Have you ever had a lapse in your practice?

NG: No, I have always sat, even when I have been in dangerous circumstances, as in Germany during the War. I still always found the chance to sit for 10 or 20 minutes before any action. Without meditation I would not have survived. When you see such evil committed as I did . . . In my own being I

know that I cannot change the world, I can't change another person. That is the whole point of Buddhist teaching. I can only change myself. When you deeply meditate on lovingkindness or sympathetic joy—which is the absolute basis—with practice it becomes spontaneous, and then you will live in that state. But you cannot get into that state without meditation practice, and you *must* apply it to your daily life. I wonder sometimes about American Buddhists. Are they really trying to apply their Buddhism? They go to their pillows and they sit, my dear, and they pay hundreds of dollars. It seems to me that, if you go and spend \$200 for a weekend somewhere, you might want to think about spending \$100 for someone else who is in need—this is the absolute balance that is needed. If you go to the pillow, you must practice it in the world in order for your sitting to really bloom.

I'm glad to see that there are more and more women becoming teachers, though most Buddhist teachers *still* are men. It seems to me that one should notice that. Not judge it, but be very aware of it. We should notice that here in the U.S., as well as in Asia, patriarchal culture is still very present as an archetypal phenomenon. Of course, Buddhism has always undergone transformation when it has moved from culture to culture, and it will take some more time for Buddhism to find its way here. The question is, how can Eastern Buddhism fit into our notions of personal freedom, democracy, and so on?

Another thing: I've noticed that some American Buddhists seem very concerned with the notion of enlightenment. This whole idea of enlightenment has

never concerned me. Enlightenment happens at each moment. If I realize something, and then I change and transform, *that* is enlightenment. I never thought of enlightenment as one big BOOM, and then you have it. You don't. You lose it. Or I did.

BPF: Just like any experience.

NG: It's simply only an experience. That's really important to understand. You know, one thing that is very important to inquire into is *why* you go to the cushion. What happens there? When you get up from the cushion, what happens then? How do you put that into practice? It is sacred to sit on a cushion, and I love to bow to it, but I love to bow when I get up and leave the cushion and walk away, too.

BPF: We've made it sort of precious.

NG: I can't *stand it!* Anything that is precious is too much. *Too much!* [she rings the bell loudly].

BPF: Nicola, you're so lucky to have had such a wonderful start in life.

NG: You know, my parents never imposed any idea of "truth" on me, but gave me some patterns of living, some tools to deal with whatever happened. For instance, when I was angry or confused, I learned to use

the bell [rings the bell] to cut across that confused consciousness. To have a moment of interruption to think more clearly. Also, from the earliest age my parents taught me to go over my day and decide what was harmonious and what was disharmonious. Something disharmonious can be changed into harmony. That enabled me to go the next day or a week later to someone and say "I'm sorry." I still do this, but there are some people I have not yet said "sorry" to.

I also learned that giving and taking are the same. Every few weeks I had to give something away—something I liked. Most people give away something they're trying to get rid of. I've never given a present that I wouldn't want myself. It's an honoring to receive something, and it's an honoring to give. Give-and-take is an extraordinary teaching. It's just like breathing: In and out. You receive and you give. Now mind you, that took a while to grasp, which I did finally on my 13th birthday. On that day, my family and I went out to the countryside with some relatives. I went for a walk by myself, and I'd forgotten my water bottle. I was so thirsty. I sat down, so tired and thirsty, and suddenly there fell this apple. I picked it up [she pauses for some time, closes her eyes]—and I can still feel the taste of that first bite that took away my thirst. There were apples all around on the ground; I could have picked one up. But it was *this* particular apple falling in my lap . . . I understood in that moment that giving and taking are the same.

BPF: Letting go is the most difficult thing for me.

NG: Begin by giving something of yours away every

*All of us are bells. Each of us has
our own sound, and we tune it by
how we are in the world.*

two weeks. Begin. Something you like. Is that ever a practice for letting go! I don't think I would have survived the loss of everything during the war if I hadn't done this practice. We are so connected with material things, which express so many things for us. Letting go of material things is one of the most important things you can undertake.

Another tool I learned to use as a child—and that I still use today—is to write “instructions to myself.” It might be something simple, like “remember to take the book back,” or “don't forget to brush your teeth.” Or to be aware, when I'm eating, of where the food comes from. Even today, I have these instructions taped up around my apartment—on the refrigerator, in the bathroom, all over [see sidebar]. It is so powerful—because what we do in the world is so important; it's how we create ourselves. Everything must be *practiced*. I might forget something I've read or heard or seen, but if I *do* something, it will be imprinted upon my being.

Let me tell you another story. When I was growing up, one of our neighbors was a sculptor. I would sit and watch this guy, as he would take his chisel and hammer and work on wood, and suddenly there would be a finger, an arm. One day I said to him, “That is really a wonder, isn't it? How do you know to put the chisel right there?” He looked at me and said, “Yes Nicola, it is a wonder, isn't it?” I said, “That finger lives in the tree trunk, doesn't it? And you come and bring it out!” He said, “Yes, that is the wonder. You see, Nicola, you are also a tree trunk. All of us are tree trunks.” “Oh,” I said, “you mean to say, everything lives in me, and I can bring it out? You mean to say I'm a sculptor? If I do things well, if I do my homework well, then I sculpt myself?” It's amazing, really, what happens in a human mind. I got the idea that I was a sculptor, and that my actions, the way I would live, would bring out what was in me. The next day I said to my parents, what we need to do is practice.

BPF: Practice what? Bringing things out?

NG: Yes, we need to do whatever we do well, to bring out our essence, our body, our figure.

BPF: The particular form that we are.

NG: Precisely. The particular form I am, which is *in* me, which is already there. To free that form I needed to do certain things, the way a sculptor would use a chisel and hammer. I figured out that whatever I did, I needed to do it faithfully and well. If you wash a dish, you do it well. In the well doing is an honoring. You wash a bowl or plate because you will eat from it again. It holds your food for you. In understanding that, I learned about non-duality. There is not a spiritual world and a mundane world. *Everything* is me. That is the point.

After a few weeks, I went back to the sculptor. I said, “Look at me. Can you see my *gestalt* more clearly today?” “No, not yet, Nicola,” he laughed. “It takes

time, you know. When you help your mother plant a garden, remember, it takes time for a plant to come out from the dark. The seed starts off protected by the earth, and then finally it comes out to be nourished by the rain and what is in the air.” I grasped what he meant. A few weeks later I went back and asked, “Can

Instructions to Myself

[Posted around Nicola Geiger's house]

*Walk and drive carefully so no harm
will come to sentient beings.*

Be aware of my power behind the wheel.

Do not leave scraps of food uneaten.

Do not use water unnecessarily.

Do not leave lights burning that are not needed.

*As I wash my hands, may I acquire sensitive hands
with which to hold the truth.*

Deeply respect the worth of each object.

Be at all times aware of the indivisibility of existence.

you see it, can you see my being more clearly?” “Oh, yes! Yes!” he said “Let me see. Yes, there are signs!” His whole face lit up.

Even today I think of people as tree trunks. I learned also from that not to judge people. Of course, I've had reactions to people, but in principle I don't judge.

BPF: So in a sense you didn't judge the Nazis?

NG: Right. The fascism that lived at that time lived before. And is still living. You can't blame just one people. The intention of the German people in 1918 was to accomplish a feat that was unheard of: to build a democracy by bringing feudalism to an end in a civilized way. In Russia, the tsar and his whole family were murdered! I grew up in the midst of that dream—the dream of creating a democracy. But the dream was shattered by the rise of fascism, which was fueled by anti-Semitism and the fear of communism in Germany, and by the fear of European royalty in other countries that they might also lose power if the German effort at democracy succeeded. With the collapse of the Weimar Republic, Hitler was looked on as a savior—everything was clean, everything was beautiful, everyone was employed.

It took me awhile to register what was going on in Germany at that time, even though I heard my father voicing his unhappiness with the Nazis. I was just an adolescent at the time—going to school, doing my homework, falling in love for the first time. What finally

Continued on page 41

A Malaysian Monastic Renounces the Robe and Makes Community —

Renegade Bodhisattva

by Piyasilo

based on a conversation with Maylie Scott

Piyasilo (the Dharma name of Tan Beng Sin), born in Malaysia, spent over 20 years as a traditional Theravadin monk and teacher in Malaysia and Thailand. In 1993, he voluntarily disrobed to lead a more engaged life, as the following account describes. He is currently on sabbatical from his community of engaged Buddhist friends in Malaysia (the Community of Dharmafarers) and is living in Berkeley, California, where he studies Buddhist languages, Buddhist psychology, Sociology of Religion, and related fields. He also gives classes in Buddhadharma and meditation.

After 20 years in the robe, it is clear to me now how difficult it is to be engaged with the world while being a Theravadin monk in Asia. Of course, there is (and should be) a core of monastic and hermit practitioners (as in the days of the Buddha himself) who are our teachers and exemplars, and as long as they are *spiritually* engaged, they are worthy of our respect. Today's monastic forest monks will be a great influence on us, especially where ecology is concerned. Forest monks serve as a reminder of the ideal human state that was and can be again: living in a healthy and natural environment surrounded by the peace and beauty of nature.

But I have chosen a different path. A person must have some natural inclination to live a cloistered life, and I have realized that is not the kind of life I fit into, good as it may be. I'm often bubbling over with questions and ideas, and this mental activity becomes expressive energy that pushes me to meet people, to find out how they think and how Buddhism works for them.

The cloistered life conditions you to express only certain set ideas. Monastics who express what they *really* think and feel are very rare. And when they do, they can be very controversial and often have to pay heavy costs for their openness. Those who struggle on undaunted become spiritual giants, but most fall quietly by the wayside. I do not want to take that chance.

When I reached the end of my first ten years as an ordained monk, I was at a crossroads. It was basically a choice between the Arhat ideal (i.e. the forest cloisters) and the Bodhisattva life (i.e. engaged life). The Bodhisattva life is more appealing to me for various reasons. The Buddha was a Bodhisattva first, during his many previous lives, building up his virtues or perfections (*paramita*) on the road to Enlightenment. For me, the Bodhisattva life, well-lived, would in due

course lead to the Arhat path. Frankly, I don't feel that either path is more spiritual or "Buddhist" than the other. It is a matter of personality and personal inclination. Above all, one should not be fanatical about it.

Sometimes I wonder if some of those who champion the Arhat path (as they perceive it) are using it as an excuse to run away from the world, or to do nothing while watching the world suffer. Their attitude seems to be: "What can we do about it: it is all craving, ignorance and karma, isn't it?" There is a kind of pernicious fatalism under the cloth. And I cannot wear that cloth.

There were many events that led me to take the Bodhisattva path. I remember the first time I received alms in my almsbowl from people in the streets of Bangkok. The donors stood quietly by the streets at

There is a kind of pernicious fatalism under the cloth. And I cannot wear that cloth.

dawn; they placed food and other gifts into my bowl. Rarely was a word spoken, but there was a close bond between giver and receiver: it was a celebration of our faith. But, I reflected, we are taking from the people. Now what must we give in return? In my monastic training, I learned that we reciprocate the donor's generosity by studying the scriptures, by practicing the teachings, by living the holy life, and in that way we bless the donors. However, such a state of affairs does not happen as often as it should. There are too many discrepancies and I found it extremely difficult to reconcile them. One big discrepancy is that there is an imbalance between the faith of the laity and the *lack* of faith of the monastics. This is especially true of urban monastics.

One of my spiritual trainings as a monk was to not plan things, but to watch what was going on around and in me. This is an excellent training, since it keeps you mindful and out of trouble. But as time passed, I realized that I am a part of everything whether I like it or not, and I *do* influence my surroundings, even by not doing anything. In some circumstances, "merely watching" can become a conspiracy of silence. And the patience of a good monk may allow him to suffer in silence. Yet I'm often tickled when, looking back, I reflect how some monks and nuns make such a big deal of being "humble." The greater the humility they seem to publicly display, I now realize, the greater their charisma becomes. *True* monastic humility is that of the simple itinerant life of a poor ascetic monk.

Monastics, through an exemplary life and wisdom, *can* encourage the laity to keep to the Buddhist path. However, in my experience this rarely happens. First, in the established Buddhism in Malaysia, the laity have relegated most of their spiritual responsibilities to the monastics, from whom they receive blessings and promises of this-worldly success. Second, the monastics generally reflect the standard of living of their followers. Monastics and their temples tend to become a kind of grand mirror that the laity stand before, admiring themselves. In short, the monastics became domesticated by the laity, and the laity in turn domesticated by the monastics.

In such a situation, you are unlikely to find thinking Buddhists. They would stand out like the proverbial nail and be hammered down just as they stand up. But there *are* those who think and want to change things for the better. In the course of public teaching sessions I gave, I discovered that there are many such people. How wonderful it would be, I thought, if such like-minded people could work and maybe live together, outside the monastery.

So after completing five years of tutelage as a monk in Thailand, I returned to Malaysia, hoping to find kindred spirits to work with. It was a gradual process, building a sangha. For one thing, when I first returned to Malaysia, I was caught in between the Thai (in whose Order I ordained) and the Sinhalese Buddhists (who speak English); these are the two groups who form the core of institutionalized Buddhism in Malaysia. I have a penchant for getting caught between worlds: it seems as if I often find myself in a bardo state! I'm neither Thai nor Sinhalese, but there is *no* Malaysian Sangha. The Sinhalese monastics in Malaysia are as a rule foreign missionaries from Sri Lanka. Their support comes largely from the affluent middle and upper classes, and they spare no effort to be in the government's good graces. Such good behavior has earned them the donation of state land and other benefits. The Malaysian Thai monastics, on the other hand, are natives but a minority mostly in the northern states bordering Thailand. Most Thai monastics ordain for a short while (from a few weeks to a few years), and are better connected with the grassroot Buddhists of Malaysia.

Anyway, I got my own place during the second decade of my monkhood, a house (in a suburb of Kuala

Lumpur) lent to me rent-free. This marked the beginning of my break from traditional temple Buddhism. What I had effectively done was to put my energies into house-centered Buddhism. This was something very rare at that time, but in recent years the number of house centers has grown, especially to cater to those who are more interested in meditation (which the town temples usually discouraged since, as one abbot complained, "it is a waste of time, just sitting and doing nothing"). Also, over the years I had been giving national courses in Buddhism which attracted hundreds of people, and these courses were a vital source of my early contacts from which came the core of my spiritual community.

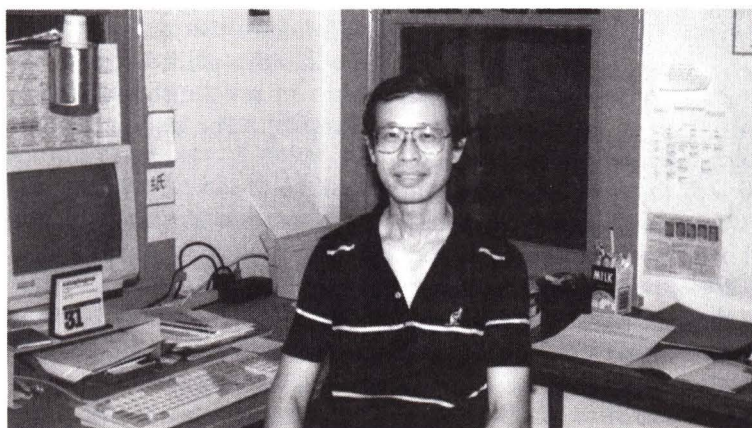
We seem to have two kinds of Malaysian Buddhists: one group tends to see Buddhism as an annual calendar

of fun events (celebrations, vaudeville, stage productions, hymn singing, etc.) and another group sees it as mostly work and study. And it is those from the second group who tend to be attracted to me. I made a special effort to teach them some sort of balance (like having musical evenings and going camping in the jungle parks of Malaysia) be-

sides our calendar of study classes, rituals, and meditation retreats. Eventually, we found a place to work and live together, and a sense of a community began to become more real.

Over time, I detected two levels of community. One is a conducive *place* to work in, where well-intentioned people can work together as and when they can (Malaysian Buddhists tend to be incredibly busy people). The second level is a wholesome *emotion* that like-minded people have for one another: a mutual admiration for the unique skills and goodness of each person. In fact, this is a basis of spiritual friendship, which is what community is all about. Such a wholesome feeling of community is not necessarily based geographically. In the case of the Community of Dharmafarers (as we call ourselves), community is founded on that good feeling we have for one another, and without which there can be no community, but a mere juxtaposition of bodies. Members of a community may (even should) sometimes live apart from one another. But it is also vital that they meet in communion often, especially when the community is new or large.

Our community members decided to give teachings and run retreats because *we* found those things diffi-



Piyasilo

cult! Our motto was: As we learn we will teach; as we teach we will learn. We knew many Buddhists treated the temples like a hospital, going there only when they had problems. We hoped, through our teaching, we could help them see a little further and higher. At the same time, we did not deny that people have problems and need help, and that Buddhism *can* help, so we offered free spiritual counseling services. The idea was to teach those who came to us to be spiritually self-reliant in a sangha-spirited sense.

The life of a Dharmacari—a lay-monastic, socially engaged Buddhist—is a life that one must consciously decide to lead. That is, one must be willing to take a truly honest look at oneself and take up the Buddhist life despite one's weaknesses. One becomes a Dharmacari not so much because one is a good Buddhist, but because one feels that one is *not* good enough, but aspires to become better. This is to experience the proverbial "beginner's mind," to be an eternal learner.

The starting point and foundation of Dharmacari training is the meditation retreat. As a rule, we start with a week-long retreat, and then go on to longer ones. The foundation practices are breath meditation and the cultivation of lovingkindness. Breath meditation helps us concentrate our energies leading towards wisdom, and lovingkindness helps us accommodate more and more people into our lives in a wholesome manner. One meditation balances the other.

I can't help noticing that in the U.S., the tendency is to stress breath meditation in its various forms, but lovingkindness is lacking. It would be good to balance the practice: it would help soften, even prevent, conflicts within the community. The basic idea of meditation is to focus your energies towards wholesome ends; that is, to be happy, to work happily, and *be* happily with others.

There are two vital aspects of community development. The first is internal development; that is, how the community members live the Dharma (meditate and so on) and how they accept one another in a wholesome manner. First you must focus your vision and energies, train yourself to see yourself more clearly and set your priorities right. It is when all the community members have the same centripetal focus that they really form a community centered around inner stillness.

The second aspect, external development of the community, is a centrifugal process: The community radiates its wholesome energies outward, attracting those who come in contact with it. It is important to notice how the community treats newcomers and non-community members. How friendly and responsive are they to non-community members? Do they wait for people to talk to them, or do they initiate friendship? One hindrance to a healthy community in the States, I think, is the high level of privacy that individuals expect from others. In a sense, community members have no private lives: where there is trust and love, there is

nothing to hide. A community thrives on healthy openness, which takes time to build up. And again, for this reason, the cultivation of lovingkindness is vital. The feeling when we meet a community member should be one of admiration and comfort; "spiritual ease." People who cannot be "inner" members of the community would find themselves spiritually recharged when they come into contact with such a community.

Some communities tend to be exclusivist; they relegate those who are not "committed" to them to the outer margins of their realms. Such a community is often worried that its lifestyle might be diluted by outsiders. In reality, it is religious protectionism! If a group is exclusivist, it means that it lacks faith in itself, perhaps even in Buddhism. It probably means the guru sits uneasily at the center of the web, quick to arrest any tremor, chasing away perceived predators or devouring prey. In the meantime, the web is being spun in ever more sophisticated and enticing strands and colors. There is also a tendency in such a group to publicly make self-promoting claims about itself, for example, by claiming to have close connections or "received teachings" from well known monks, lamas, gurus or luminaries. This is an important stage in the development of a cult, not a community.

In our Community, we make a point of being non-exclusive. All our members are involved in some kind of outside occupation. One works as a computer consultant, and even when he sells computers, he is not afraid (at the right time) to say to his client that he is a Buddhist. Very often, this has a wholesome effect because the client might become interested in meditation. Everyone has a job that allows some control over their own time, and the kind of work they do allows them to meet people, and as such they can also "sell" Buddhism.

In recent years, as I've been living in the West, I've begun to realize that the West strongly influences us Asian Buddhists, in more ways than we would care to admit. But I don't think a word like "Westernizing" makes much sense, because it is used in different ways by different people. For example, when an Asian dislikes a new idea that threatens his or her position, he or she may claim that the proponent is attempting to "Westernize" the situation. I have come across the converse, too, where people in the West feel there is too much "Asianizing" of Buddhism in the West. Too often, Western and Asian Buddhists reign over two separate worlds, one suspicious and averse to the other. But the marriage of the two is vital for a complete social experience of Buddhism.

There is no shortage of wisdom sources in American Buddhism. You can choose from the whole gamut of Buddhist teachers and there are many academic courses available. However, if such a one-sided development continues, we are likely to have a nation of very lonely

Continued on page 44

The Practice of Deep Ecology —

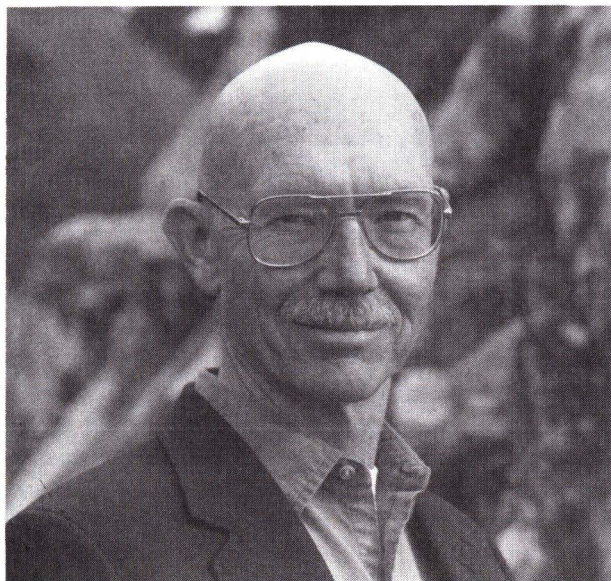
Belly Full of Salmon

by Stephanie Kaza

Bill Devall is known internationally for his work pioneering the Deep Ecology movement. A practicing Buddhist, author of three books on Deep Ecology and co-editor of the forthcoming book, Clearcut, Bill has worked relentlessly to save wilderness in the Klamath-Siskiyou region and ancient redwoods on the Northwest Coast of the U.S. from further environmental degradation. He teaches at Humboldt State University in Arcata, California.

BPF: Thich Nhat Hanh once asked a large audience in America—what is the face of American Buddhism? From an environmental perspective, what would you say?

Bill Devall: The face of American Buddhism is a contented grizzly bear contemplating his belly full of salmon.



Bill Devall

BPF: What do you mean by that? What do grizzly bears have to do with Buddhism?

BD: An enlightened person inhabiting the grizzly bear's bioregion would respect and honor the space within which the grizzly bear dwells. Deep Ecology philosophy is based on a sense of identification with other beings. Buddhist practice, it seems to me, helps us experience our broader identification with others. To identify with grizzlies is to recognize their need for the greater Yellowstone ecosystem—two million acres in the Northern Rockies which marks the limits of their

current range in the lower 48 states. The face of American Buddhism, for me, is each bioregion reflecting upon itself like the surface of a pond reflecting the clouds, the coming and going of the moon, the frogs jumping in and out of the pond.

In my area, the Klamath-Siskiyou bioregion, the face of American Buddhism is a face I've never seen—a wild wolverine. The last recorded sighting of this animal in the Klamath-Siskiyou wilderness was in 1954. Where I live is one of the areas of greatest biodiversity in the world. This is due to the complex geology and topography and wide range of habitats from coastal to rain-forest to dry chaparral. It was one of two areas proposed by scientists for biological protection as far back as the 1930s. I am currently working with the Siskiyou Regional Education Project to prepare a proposal for a Siskiyou Biodiversity National Park, the first U.S. park that would be devoted to biological protection of diversity. This remarkable area includes *six* designated "Wild and Scenic" rivers which are still undammed.

BPF: I understand you are just completing work on an extensive research project for a book on the practice of clearcutting. How did you get started on that?

BD: Doug Tompkins, of the Foundation for Deep Ecology, asked me if I would fly with him in his small plane from Arcata to British Columbia to assess the state of the North Coast landscape. So we flew across the devastation caused by the logging in the lower Klamath River area. The extent of the bald areas was shocking from the air. We flew almost six hours from southern Oregon to British Columbia and were never out of sight of massive clearcuts. We realized we had to show the world the reality of what we had seen. Private landholders and timber companies as well as the U.S. Forest Service have been fooling the public for years with their "beauty strips"—strips of forest left along highways and rivers which hide the damage behind them.

We asked citizen activists from across the country to tell us the locations of the worst clearcuts they knew. Then we sent professional photographers out to document these landscapes from the air. They went to Alaska, Vancouver Island, Maine, Arkansas, the Ohio Valley, Georgia—all over the continent. Everywhere they went they came back with photos worse than we had seen before. Out of 1000 photos, we selected 120 for the book to show the American landscape of the 1990s. The book, called *Clearcut*, is being underwritten by the Foundation for Deep Ecology as an educational tool for federal and state decision-makers. In the

text we outline the fallacies of the practice of clearcutting, promote current alternatives in conservation biology, and offer a vision of ecoforestry—sustainable forestry practices based on ecological principles.

BPF: The book project must have been very depressing at times. How do you cope with the unending devastation of the land?

BD: I've gone through a lot of phases—anger, depression, illness. Physical illness, in fact. My watershed was sprayed with 2,4,5 D. I went out one morning and saw the spray planes overhead; the air smelled strange. I think this likely contributed to my getting a condition called *Alopecia* which causes hair loss and dry skin. At the moment I am in a detached phase. The social forces are so large and their power to ruin the landscape so great. What can I do except put out the message as I see it?

BPF: You're very committed to social action work on behalf of forests, especially in your own local bioregion. Are you ever threatened by others who disagree with you?

BD: Living here in Humboldt County is like living in a war zone. Just today someone threw a rock through my car window and smashed it to smithereens. Of course, it may have been accidental. But I have a lot of enemies in the area. I've been a point man for anti-Earth First actions. This week, for example, there have been demonstrations every day by Earth Firsters against Maxxam Corporation. These activists are committed to the philosophy and working principles of Deep Ecology. So naturally I am associated with their activities, even though I am not a leader in the group.

BPF: What keeps you going in this work? What are your sources of satisfaction and inspiration?

BD: One of my great inspirations is Ed Abbey, an old-time anarchist who liked the phrase, "Obey little, resist much." I am inspired by being a part of the resistance movement, providing some friction against the wheel of production, working to slow down the juggernaut of industrial society as much as I can. I believe that environmentalists are the most effective movement in our society to slow down the accumulation of capital based on the exploitation of nature.

Here in Humboldt County we are trying to stop the activities of Maxxam Corporation which is determined to cut the last unprotected stand of old-growth redwoods. One group I work with, the Environmental Protection Information Center (EPIC), has filed and won several lawsuits to slow down the cutting. The Headwaters Parcel is 4500 acres of stunning, ancient trees, and it ought to remain protected for the public and future generations. If Maxxam has its way, these trees will go the way of much of the original redwood belt along the coast, and it will be a loss for all of us.

BPF: How does your interest in Buddhism and your Buddhist practice tie in with this kind of work?

BD: I want to say first that the Deep Ecology movement is not an attempt to set out a new religion. It is

what I call a second level kind of approach. I talk about Buddhism *and* Deep Ecology. I was raised a Christian in the Congregational Church in Kansas City. When I was 17, I wanted to make the choice to become a conscientious objector instead of registering for the draft. I wrote to the Church of the Brethren and got some information, but there was no one at my church to help me. My parents thought I was crazy and wanted me to seek psychiatric counseling. So my first inclination as a teenager was to be part of the peace movement, but with no support I had to drop my interest.

I went to college at the University of Kansas, and as soon as I could, I left the Midwest for an area of greater cultural diversity. After several years at the University of Hawaii, I began a Ph.D. program at the University of Oregon. I still did not know much about environmentalism. But there I began reading Gary Snyder and Paul Shepard, and I met David Brower. The rest is history, as they say. I wrote my dissertation in sociology on the internal politics of the Sierra Club, exploring the environmental movement from the inside out.

As for my religious interest, it picked up again with my exposure to Buddhism in the 1970s. What I discovered in Buddhism through teachers such as Joanna Macy has a much closer affinity to my intuition of Deep Ecology than the training I had in Christianity. I practice in a local sangha in Arcata where we work on ourselves in the context of the place where we live. We hold our retreats in local wild areas where we do walking and sitting meditation, and we include members of the wider eco-sangha in our community.

BPF: What difference has Buddhism made in your environmental work and in your life?

BD: It has made a big difference through learning compassion. I work with many people of many different points of view, some of whom can make me very angry. The practice of compassion helps me in trying to understand others. Also, I am glad to move away from the Christian idea of redemption and original sin to the Buddhist idea of "turning the wheel"—being part of something greater than ourselves. This sense of the greater whole is very important in trying to envision long-term health for the planet. We need to have what my friend Randy Hayes, director of Rainforest Action Network, calls the "necessary NO": saying no to the forest-products corporations who are moving into Siberia and Chile and Canada to take the remaining wild forests. We also need the "necessary YES" to develop our own vision 500 years or more into the future, to inspire us to take the path that has not yet been taken in this country—the path that I see as absolutely necessary for ourselves. ♦

Stephanie Kaza is the author of The Attentive Heart: Conversations with Trees (Ballantine, 1993). She teaches in the environmental program at the University of Vermont and is a BPF board member.

Superconsciousness, HIV, and Quaker meetings —

Dogs Do Bark, Babies Do Cry

by Denise Caignon

Raised by activist, atheist parents, Kristen Freitas grew to become a deeply spiritual person and an activist in her own right. Today she is the mother of a teenage daughter, Carrie, and—speaking from her own experience as a woman infected with the HIV virus—she is a member of her community's AIDS education speaker's bureau.

In talking with Kristen, I was struck by the parallels between her Quaker spiritual practice and my own experience with Zen Buddhist practice and retreats.

BPF: What led you to become a member of the First Hand [people with AIDS or who are HIV-positive] speakers bureau?

Kristen Freitas: It was because I felt so isolated with the disease. My husband, who died of AIDS three years ago, didn't want us to talk about it to anyone—our families, friends, co-workers. He was in so much denial and felt such shame about it. I felt I had to honor his wishes. He had a few books and magazines on AIDS, and he would hide them as if they were *Playboy* magazines.

I did manage to educate my daughter about AIDS. I could see that she didn't have many opportunities to talk about it. She'd talk to me, but she'd hold back because she didn't want to hurt me. She was protecting me from her feelings, because she thought I had enough to deal with. After my husband died, when she was about 13, I saw her withdrawing more and more. She told me she couldn't relate to her friends because all they wanted to talk about was their boyfriends or their new haircuts.

I felt my relationships were so superficial because people didn't know the reality of my life. And when I saw how Carrie was getting, I made the decision to start telling people I had AIDS. I really believe that the silence

perpetuated the shame. If I'm infected and I'm not talking about it, I'm just perpetuating fear and shame.

BPF: So who did you tell first?

KF: The Educational Director at the AIDS Project. I didn't know much about the First Hand program, but she said she really thought I should do it. I said I'd like my daughter to do it too, and she said that was great. So I went home and told Carrie, "I'm joining the First Hand speakers, and I'm gonna go out and tell people what it's like to live with AIDS. I was wondering if you'd be interested in doing that too—talk about what it's like living in a family with AIDS." She said yes, yes, I wanna do it, I wanna do it. She gets a lot of emotional support for doing the talks. After awhile, she started going out and doing things again—going to movies, dances. She was no longer isolated.

BPF: And the same for you, right?

KF: Yeah, it's really changed the way some people relate to me. A lot of people still have the idea that only gay men and intravenous drug users are infected with HIV. So I get up there and blow their belief



Kristen Freitas and daughter Carrie

system. When I get out there and talk to people, I tell myself at least one person is going to get the message, and at least one person isn't going to be infected. Which means they're not going to infect someone else. So many people don't have any personal experience with AIDS (although they may know someone and not know they have AIDS—the person with the disease may not even know they have it themselves). They've never had the opportunity to ask questions about AIDS, and it gives them the chance to be face to face with me.

BPF: Is there a time that particularly stands out, when you've changed someone's attitude about AIDS?

KF: I recently did a training for nine international health workers, from Africa and South America. They were here to learn about AIDS, so they could go back to their countries and educate their populations and

other health-care workers. Prior to the training we had handed out a questionnaire with questions like, "If you knew your sister or your wife had AIDS, what would you do?" Some of the people said things like they'd never talk to the person with AIDS again. And these were all health-care professionals in their countries! There was one man from Egypt, who was the equivalent of the Surgeon General in the U.S., and he had strong negative feelings about AIDS. But by the end of the training, he said he realized, after seeing people like me, the impact AIDS has had on the family, the community, the society, the world. When he first came to the training, he didn't think education was necessary, but he's now going back with AIDS education as his priority for people in Egypt.

BPF: And it must be a real eye-opener for people to see women with AIDS, which hasn't gotten a lot of attention until recently.

KF: Women are in such denial. They think it can never happen to them. It's hard to combat that, because people feel so righteous in their judgment and so safe in their denial. Most people in this country infected with HIV are still gay men, but it's moving into the heterosexual population. The fastest growing group of new cases of AIDS is among young women of childbearing age who got it through heterosexual sex.

BPF: Which is how you got it.

KF: Which is how I got it. So it's hard to break through that denial, because they're not seeing it happen to other women yet. I used to ask for a show of hands of how many people knew someone who was HIV-positive or who had AIDS. Sometimes one hand might go up, or none. These days, many hands go up. But mostly the people they know are gay men. They're going to start seeing it in women more and more. You can tell them about it, but it doesn't register until you slap them in the face with it—until they see their co-workers, fellow members of the PTA, or women in their church group becoming ill and dying with this disease.

Sometimes women say they don't need to worry because they're married. Well, I was married, and that didn't protect me. I'll ask, how long have you been married? And maybe she'll say ten years. And I'll say, well, who was your husband sleeping with 15 years ago? That's how long ago *my* husband was probably exposed. I tell people that in 55% of marriages at least one of the partners is unfaithful at least once in the relationship. I'm not trying to destroy their trust in a partner, but I want them to question it.

You know, I talked with my husband about this. We talked about the importance of monogamy, about previous sexual experiences, had he ever been homosexual. He lied. He didn't tell me he'd been with men until he tested positive for HIV. He wouldn't even tell the *docs* he'd engaged in high-risk behavior.

I was so mad. He exposed me to the virus and I felt

like he had taken all my choices away from me. I was mad that he lied—not that he was bisexual. He was afraid to tell me because he was afraid of losing me. Well, he lost me anyway. He died. I have to be forgiving though, because it's not that he did it on purpose. He was just so deep in his denial. I fluctuate between being forgiving and being mad. But it doesn't give me anything to be angry. I feel a lot more comfortable when I forgive. The anger is like a cancer, it's so all consuming. It interferes with everything I believe. It

Mom, do you remember before I was born?

When I could see everybody because there was still magic in my head?

It's getting harder to see that way.

creeps into my subconscious and eats away at me. I really loved him, and all through his illness and death I felt that love.

BPF: Having gone through his death, how do you feel about your own? Are you afraid?

KF: I'm not afraid of death. Death is part of the natural cycle. It's every bit as natural and organic as birth. *Dying* scares me. I'm fiercely independent. As my disease progresses, I'm going to be dependent on other people to take care of me, I'm going to be incontinent, I might develop dementia. I don't want to be dependent on someone else to change my bed and wipe my butt. It's a whole new thing for me.

I'm on a pilot project where there's a care team assigned to me. They want to start the team now, while I'm still pretty healthy, so the caregivers can get to know me and we're comfortable with each other. When I get to the point where I really need them, it won't be strangers coming in to provide care for me. I had my first introduction to a caregiver yesterday. He's supposed to come once a week for four hours to help me do stuff—make the beds, meal preparation. Just real basic, light stuff. And I was so uncomfortable with him asking what he could do for me. I'm thinking, I don't want you to do *anything*.

Pain and suffering I'm not so worried about. Suffering is there from the moment we're born; as babies we didn't like it when we cut teeth. But when tragic things happen, it's just part of our growth process. Labor was painful, but the end result was beautiful. I put myself through college working in convalescent hospitals, and I saw cancer patients in a lot of pain. But I also saw growth, I saw forgiveness, I saw people who had never had spiritual experiences have them as a result of that pain.

BPF: Has having AIDS affected your faith in any way?

KF: My faith has always been really strong. I do know people with AIDS or other life-threatening diseases who suddenly find faith, or some belief in God when they get sick. But I always had mine, I never lost it. I didn't have any faith in *people*, and that's what I've regained—that there are good people, caring people, and they want to help. I used to be pretty antisocial, but I've changed. I see people who really want to do something about AIDS, not just out of curiosity or obligation, but with real heartfelt compassion and empathy.

BPF: And this firm faith of yours—has it taken a particular religious or spiritual form?

KF: Well, I'm Quaker now, but I come from an atheist family; we never talked about God or spirituality. Occasionally a friend would invite me to Sunday school with them, and my Mom would say no, we're gonna go see Grandma today or we've gotta do this or that. I didn't realize at the time that their *real* motive was to keep me from being exposed to those ideas.



My parents were political activists—way to the left—and were very active in the Civil Rights movement. My mother met with Martin Luther King, who of course was a deeply spiritual man. But my parents didn't talk about that. They were only interested in the human rights aspect. When I got older they told me they considered spirituality to be just mythology. I thought it was curious that they raised me with Greek and Nordic and Celtic mythology, but no Christian or Jewish mythology.

Once when I was nine or ten, a friend asked me to go to Sunday school with them, and this time my mother said yes. It was a Pentecostal church, holy rollers. They were rolling on the floor, and wetting their pants and speaking in tongues. It really scared me, and I never asked to go to Sunday school again. I think that's why she let me go to that one—she knew it would be frightening to me.

When I was in high school in the early '60s, the whole business with U.S. intervention in Vietnam was starting to escalate. I was outraged. The more I read,

the madder I got. I saw an article in the paper written by the "Berkeley Friends" that was protesting U.S. involvement. At the time, I didn't equate "Friends" with the Quakers. Anyway, I called and asked when they had meetings.

I wasn't expecting what happened at that first meeting I attended. It was a standard Sunday morning silent worship, where you just sit in a circle and everybody's quiet. I expected it to be like a committee, where people talked about petitions and campaigns and what they were going to do about Vietnam. Finally somebody spoke, but they didn't say anything about the escalating war in Vietnam. They spoke from their heart about their relationship with God. It was very moving. I wondered what would happen next, and nothing happened. Everybody else was quiet, and at the end of this hour of quiet everyone joined hands. Someone stood up and said "Welcome to Berkeley Friends, and if you have any questions about the Quakers . . ." And I'm thinking: "*Quakers?!?*"

BPF: Exactly what do Quakers believe?

KF: Quakers believe that spirit is inside everybody. We refer to it as "the light," and the light of God is in everybody. The reason we sit in silence is to wait for the light to shine through. Some Quakers live their whole lives without consciously experiencing the light coming through them, while other people seem to have the light come through them more easily. So you just sit there and wait. Technically you're not supposed to get up and witness or speak unless it is the light of God coming through you.

BPF: I see a parallel with Buddhism—the idea that God is you, not out there somewhere else.

KF: There are actually a lot of people who call themselves Buddhist Quakers or Quaker Buddhists. There's no minister in a Quaker meeting, no preaching, no sermon. We're very accepting of everyone's viewpoint—whatever helps a person get to God. As long as you get there, it doesn't matter how.

BPF: So, have you experienced the light coming through you?

KF: Yeah, and so has my daughter Carrie. I started experiencing it as a little kid and didn't know what it was. I would go to my mother with questions like, "What's superconsciousness?" And she'd look at me and say, "I don't understand the question." And I'd say, "You know, where everybody knows everything about everything?" I'd tell her that the planet is a living creature. It breathes, it reproduces—the Earth's crust is like its skin. If you damage it, it'll scar over, but if you give it enough time, it'll repair itself. My mother would never have much of a response to any of that. But the Quakers would talk to me about all that stuff!

BPF: What is the purpose of a Quaker meeting?

KF: Just to join together in silence. When I'm in silence by myself, meditating, it's different than when

I'm with a group of people doing the same thing; the energy flow changes. It's very nurturing.

BPF: I've gone to silent meditation retreats where I didn't know one person, and came out feeling so intimate with everyone.

KF: You get in touch with the essence of people's spirit. It's so much deeper than any conversation you could have. In our time zone, all the Quakers meet at the same time. Sitting in a room with 50 or 60 people, I know that I'm connected with thousands of Quakers. Of course, not every meeting is spiritually uplifting, and that's accepted.

BPF: Sounds like everything is accepted.

KF: That's what I like about the Quakers. There's no right or wrong. It's based on openness, acceptance—accepting the spirit within everyone and everything.

BPF: Is there something in that accepting attitude that engenders an activist response to the world? The Quakers have quite a long tradition of political and social action.

KF: There's a feeling that it's our responsibility to take care of our own lives. Within my home, it's my responsibility to take care of it and treat anyone who enters with respect. You take that a step further, it's within your community, it's within your school district, it's within the state, the nation, it's the whole planet. This is our home. Earth is our home. We're all human, we're all connected, and that extends beyond our little circle of friends and family. If there are homeless people out there, you can't wait for someone else to feed them.

BPF: Part of your engagement in the world is in being a mother and doing AIDS education. What other ways has being a Quaker affected your work in the world?

KF: I was very active with the Vietnam war. My favorite thing to do was to go into the induction centers, before those boys stepped over that line, and ask them if they knew they had alternatives. Is this what you really want to do? Of course, the staff would ask me to leave, and I'd say, "Well, what laws am I breaking?" I wasn't breaking any; I was just talking with the boys. And sometimes the boys would walk out with me, and I'd help them get to Canada.

BPF: Did you notice a difference in your life after going to Quaker meetings?

KF: I didn't get into the spiritual aspect of the Quakers until later. At first it was just important for me to have a group to be with, who were organized and doing radical things, and who thought like I did politically. The spiritual guidance and training were secondary, but ultimately that became even more important to me than the political aspects. Now, I'm no longer on the peace and social order committee. There

are other people who can do that better than I can. I used to be involved in feeding the homeless and working with the food bank, but I'm not as active as I used to be because my energy level is so diminished since getting AIDS.

BPF: What is it like to speak in a Quaker meeting? Do you suddenly just find yourself moved to stand up?

KF: No. One of the things the Quakers emphasize is that you shouldn't just stand up and speak. You should sit with it. Let it age, and see if it's really something that's coming from the spirit. For instance, some people get up and talk about being depressed: "I'm so depressed, my mom is sick and I have to deal with putting her in a convalescent home . . ." They use it as a form of group therapy. But I think that's disrespectful to the meeting.

My daughter Carrie speaks often. She's still so pure, she doesn't have a lot of trouble filtering out the selfish stuff. When she speaks it's so profound. I never talked with her about spirituality, I never tried to indoctrinate her. But when she was little, four or five years old, she'd come to me with questions like, "Mom, do you remember before I was born?

When I could see everybody because there was still magic in my head? It's getting harder to see that way."

BPF: Reminds me of a famous koan: "Show me your original face before your parents were born."

KF: One day during a silent meeting, the windows were open and there was a lot of noise outside on the street. I'm sitting there listening to the noises outside and I'm hearing kids laughing, kids fighting, I'm hearing babies crying, I'm hearing dogs barking, birds singing, people walking by with their radios. It was really noisy. As I was listening, it stopped being noise and started being *life*. The sounds of people engaged in living, the sounds of nature. I was really enjoying it, and then someone got up and closed all the windows.

My first reaction was that I could just go open the windows again. I sat with that feeling for awhile, and then a very strong message started coming through to me: I needed to remind these people that this was life. And not just life, but a blessing. I remember standing and addressing the group about blessings we'd been given that morning. I asked them to imagine a world without sound, a world without interaction. The birds *do* sing, the dogs *do* bark, the babies *do* cry. All of those sounds are beautiful; they're all part of the human experience. And the same person who closed the windows got up and opened them again. ♦

Denise Caignon is a student of Zen and has been a consulting editor of Turning Wheel during the past two years.

In 55% of marriages, at least one partner is unfaithful. I'm not trying to destroy trust in a partner, but I want women to question that trust.

Hogen Fujimoto's Buddhist Prison Ministry —

Cultivating Lotuses in the Mud

by Diane Patenaude Ames

"I feel that I've found myself, and something I can believe in—namely, Amida [Buddha] and the Nembutsu. . . I have been a very evil man, and I suppose I am still such (yet I can't think of doing those things again.) I now have faith, and that faith is in the Nam-an-da-bu, and my wish is to continue to travel on the Right Path."

The writer's statement that he had "been a very evil man" was no pious exaggeration; he was in the Nevada State Prison for having murdered several people. But neither was his wish "to travel on the Right Path" made in vain. According to the astonished warden of the prison, he had suddenly begun to refrain from violence "in spite of . . . being provoked many times." Upon being paroled, he expressed remorse at "all the pain and trouble that I have caused others," and started a radically changed life, giving the credit for all this to Amida Buddha—and to his *zenjishiki* (spiritual friend), the Rev. Hogen Fujimoto.

So who was the Rev. Hogen Fujimoto?

He was, for one thing, a Nisei (second generation Japanese American), born into a family of Japanese immigrant truck farmers in the Imperial Valley of California in 1919. This guaranteed that he experienced a lot of overt, old-fashioned racism in his youth. West Coast Nisei have told me that in those days they hung around the community Shin Buddhist temple "because they wouldn't let us into the bowling alley." Employment discrimination was so bad that Nisei college graduates were working in fruit stands. So when Fujimoto graduated from college himself, he decided that he might as well continue his studies at Ryukoku University in Kyoto, Japan. Once there, he soon decided to study Buddhism. But there was a problem: he had arrived in Japan in 1941.

On the day after the stunning news of Pearl Harbor, the instructor in Fujimoto's English class asked him to get up and discuss his opinion of the attack in English. With characteristic bluntness, he told the class that Japan had been insane to attack the United States and that within weeks, the sky would be black with American planes. He confidently predicted that Japan would lose the war. In later years he realized that it was a good thing he was excited when he made this speech, so that he spoke so rapidly that most likely no one,

with the possible exception of the teacher, understood a word he said.

Being now an enemy alien, Fujimoto was placed under the unpleasant surveillance of the Japanese political police. For the rest of the war he suffered official harassment, hunger, and spells of forced labor in rice paddies flooded with a mixture of mud and human waste. But he also got married, and was ordained as a priest of the Nishi Hongwanji sect of the Jodo Shinshu, a Japanese Pure Land Buddhist school. Finally returning to the United States in 1953, Fujimoto became a minister of the Buddhist Churches of America (B.C.A.), an American Jodo Shinshu organization which is largely Japanese American in membership. Eventually he became the head of the Department of Buddhist Education, a post he held until his death in 1982. Thus he began answering the letters that prisoners sent to B.C.A. headquarters asking about Buddhism. In many cases this led to personal correspondence, which in turn developed into personal relationships so intense that convicts began calling Rev. Fujimoto their *zenjishiki*, spiritual friend



Rev. Hogen Fujimoto

and guide. And he in turn began to see such dramatic changes in some of his convict correspondents that he began comparing them to lotuses budding in the mud of prison life. (In fact, he wrote a book about them called *Out of the Mud Grows the Lotus*.)

The multiple murderer quoted above wrote of a turning point when he saw evidence that someone had stolen his favorite cushion, and yet, to his own surprise, he did not attack that person with a blunt instrument. "So," he concluded, "perhaps, it's getting better." Although he escaped from prison at one point, causing alarm that so violent a person was loose, he was found upon recapture to have been working peacefully at a railroad job in Canada. He returned to jail without protest, complaining only that he "could never find much in the way of Buddhism" in Canada.

Clearly something had happened to this man. What?

This seems an appropriate point at which to discuss the Jodo Shinshu, often simply called the Shinshu or Shin. A Japanese Pure Land school founded by the thirteenth century master Shinran (1173-1262), the Shinshu teaches that the ego, enmeshed as it is in the web of its own attachments, is unable to liberate itself. In fact, the ego's efforts to save itself from its own egocentricity are counterproductive; they only subtly

aggrandize the ego by generating either pride or discouragement. Therefore the devotee must abandon all such attempts and rely entirely on the all-accepting, all-embracing compassion of Amida, the transcendental Buddha who is the object of Shin devotion. Even the central devotional act which Shin practitioners perform, the uttering of the *nembutsu* ("Namu Amida Butsu!"), which means "I call on Amida Buddha!"), is looked upon not as an act by which one gains religious merit, but rather as a spontaneous expression of gratitude to Amida Buddha for making salvation available to all.

Yet one must emphasize that Amida is *not* an external savior, but a principle variously characterized in Shin texts as Dharmakaya, Buddha nature, enlightenment itself. Hogen Fujimoto said that "the Truth as expounded by Sakyamuni Buddha is symbolically expressed in the form of Amida," and that, even beyond that, Amida is "Ultimate Reality." That reality (in Fujimoto's words, "Amida's love") "is here, there, and all about us and even emanates into the very heart of us." It is *not* something "above" and separate from us.

Why then are we not all enlightened? My own way of explaining this is that we all believe ourselves to be sealed off from Amida in a painfully claustrophobic, but wholly imaginary, little box. And while, for Shin, we are too deluded to escape the little box in this life, we can learn to look beyond it, to make its walls transparent so that they cease to matter so much. In other words—Fujimoto's words, in fact—we can "let-go" of ourselves.

To use my own formulation again: as long as I perceive a sharp division between My Poor Little Self and the Uncaring Universe, life is unbearably frightening unless I invent a Caring God to look after me. But then I always have to worry about whether God exists or cares. If the universe is not really separate from myself and I therefore need not be concerned about whether it is hostile or uncaring, then the problem disappears. One of Fujimoto's prisoners put this well:

The thought comes to say that I'm with Amida Buddha, but am I? Or is Amida Buddha with me? The "I" and the "me" seem to be losing meaning—words are becoming meaningless pictures and only Namu Amida Butsu has meaning.

Another concluded:

Glad news! Rejoice! There is no "I"!

The idea of the insubstantiality of the conventional self has been known to help people escape destructive behavior patterns that have become part of their self-images. It destroys the conviction, "I can't help doing that because that's just how I am." And the doctrine may also have been particularly comforting to men whom society considered pretty sorry specimens. That brings us to another aspect of Shin that Hogen

Fujimoto loved to talk about: its interpretation of the doctrine of non-duality to mean that since there is no ultimate difference between good people and bad people, Amida does not reject anybody. As Shinran wrote in his *Shoshinge*:

*When ordinary men, sages, grave sinners, and abusers
of the Dharma are all converted,
They are like various waters turned into one in taste on
entering the sea.*

Thus Rev. Fujimoto wrote, to reassure a prisoner who feared rejection after confessing that he was in prison for having killed his girlfriend:

*No, I am not disappointed in you and neither should the
news estrange us . . . Please recall Shinran Shonin's hesi-
tation to draw a line between the good and the bad. The
difference is only paper thin . . . Human values are very
unreliable. The only true value is Amida Buddha. Those
who have embraced Amida live in eternal Truth for he is
one with the Truth.*

A philosophical discussion of non-duality would be too dry and abstract a response to this man's outburst of remorse. Talking about Amida and love is more to the emotional point, which is why Shin language seems to personify Amida sometimes. But it all comes down to the same thing: that there is finally not that much difference between a great criminal and a saint, especially given that we are all a mass of passion, aggression, and ignorance anyway. And this explains why, for Shin, one's faults and past sins are no obstacle to salvation. If anything, a person who is bad and knows it is freed from the spiritual pride that builds up the ego, and so makes it more difficult to "let go" and surrender to Amida. Shinran said, "Even a good person can be born in the Pure Land; how much more so an evil person!" And Rev. Fujimoto was, for obvious reasons, fond of quoting that line.

Perhaps it was his Shin convictions that enabled Rev. Fujimoto to cope with the frustrations of working with criminals. Not only did these people constantly hit him with their seemingly hopeless problems, some of them disappointed him by landing back in prison again and again. For that matter, some of these convicts were such rough characters that Rev. Fujimoto found it unnerving when they got out of jail and walked into his office. Nonetheless, he always tried to communicate to them the message of Amida's indiscriminate compassion, sometimes with heartening results, for a number of the people he counseled were fully rehabilitated. His guiding principle—that Amida accepts even the seemingly hopeless and can help them accept themselves—may be Shin's unique contribution to Buddhist social activism. ♦

Diane Ames is a BPF member and has been a member of the Buddhist Churches of America for the past 14 years.

a conversation with the founder of the Daily Bread project —

Sacks of Rice & Houses of Straw

by Janine Kenyon and Jane Brecker

Carolyn North is the founder of the Daily Bread project (a program for feeding the hungry in Berkeley, California), and is the author of Earth Below, Heaven Above: The Musicians and the Servants (a novel based on her experiences as a midwife in India) and Seven Movements, One Song: Memoir as Metaphor. She also teaches dance as a healing and meditative technique. She is currently working on Movement as Metaphor, a study of how dance and sound are effective as medicine.

BPF: What is your spiritual practice?

Carolyn North: My work—using movement and sound as a healing technique—is my spiritual practice. I also meditate every morning for an hour.

I've been involved in looking for my spiritual practice all my life. I've done everything you can imagine, from being a Jew and trying to do that in an orthodox way as a young person, and then finding that wasn't workable for me, to studying medieval Christianity. I was a very serious Zen student for some time, and Buddhism is very important to me.

When I first began delving into spirituality, I was trying to understand what the spiritual experience is like from an intellectual standpoint: the nature of religion.

BPF: Did your search come out of experiences you had? Something must have motivated you to do the seeking in the first place.

CN: See that picture? [there is a print of a mournful Christ-like figure above her mantle]. I saw that in an art class in college and it became a touchstone for me, so I went to France to look for him; I found him in a tiny church in the south of France. I stayed and studied medieval art history as a way to understand what medieval Christianity was about. After that, I took a trip to the Galapagos Islands, and that's where I found Buddhism.

BPF: What happened there?

CN: I was a passionate reader of Darwin and was interested in the whole notion of evolution. There was something very spiritual about it, something to do with the nature of accumulated knowledge, accumulated attributes. I saw evolution as an approach to divinity, and I wanted to go to the Galapagos as a sort of pil-

grimage—where Darwin had studied birds' beaks and the differences between them. I wanted to be in that very bare landscape where he had gotten a sense of the basic pattern of the universe. I wanted to look at myself there, where there were no distractions, just me and the natural world. That's where I noticed for the first time that everything is interconnected.

Before that, I'd been in India, but not on a spiritual quest. I was being a midwife and doing other medical work. What I discovered there was something about opposites, the polarities of the universe. In India there is the utterly sublime and the utterly degraded, and somehow they coexist. I understood that paradox metaphorically as the nature of the universe.

After I left the Galapagos, I came back to the Bay Area and met Richard Baker [former abbot of San Francisco Zen Center] socially, and I felt I understood what he was talking about. I became a Zen student. I took it very seriously and was there for about five years. But there were some big problems with Zen Center, with the community and with Richard Baker, so I left.

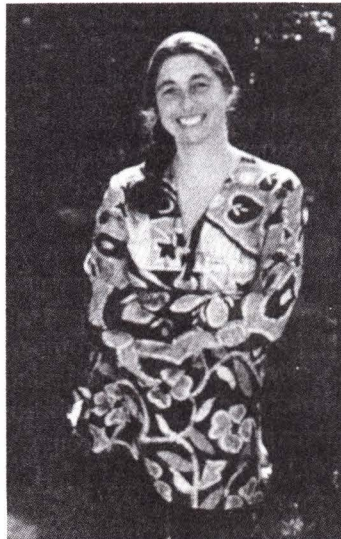
After that, I became a gospel singer in a black church. My children are all musicians, and at the time they were teaching at a young musicians' program for disadvantaged kids. The program was led by the most extraordinary musician I've ever met in my life, Philip Reeder, who was the choir director in a church. The

only way I could get to sing with him was to join the church. So I did. I spent eight years with the gospel choir, and it was one of the most profound spiritual experiences of my life.

The pastor was such a wonderful man. I used to tease him and say, "You're more Buddhist than the Buddhists." The general tenor of his teachings was not those of a fire-and-brimstone God, but about the fact that we're all connected, and the connection is basically love: the Lord comes amongst us when we open to him. Compassion and wisdom together.

BPF: So were you actually a member of the church?

CN: Well, I'm Jewish, and to become a member I would have had to be baptized and I couldn't do that. The pastor would ask me, "Well, why are you here then? Why aren't you among your own people?" I told him I didn't agree with a lot of their teachings. I said I



Carolyn North

had problems with many of the tenets of Judaism although I felt ethnically connected to my people. He offered to teach me the Old Testament “so you can appreciate your own religion. So I went to his Bible classes, where I spent a year and a half studying the Old Testament with him, and I finally got it. I saw what was positive about Judaism, and also how it’s been misunderstood and how much of it is really mis-translation. The basic teachings are the basic teachings of all religions.

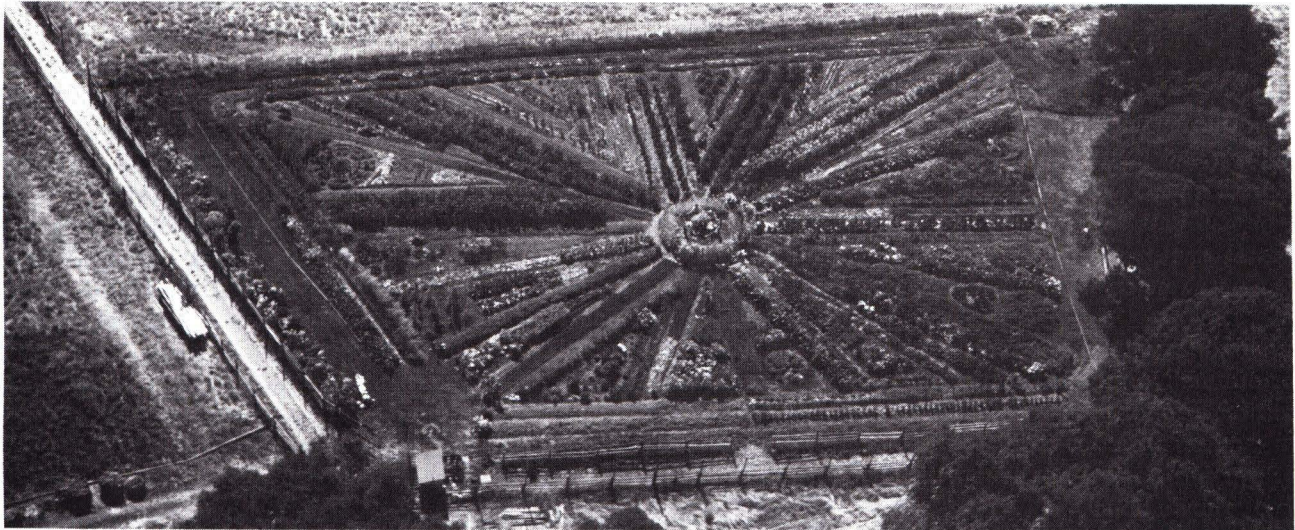
Anyway, Phil Reeder died tragically, and the pastor started going the way of some of the Buddhist teachers—caught by power and influence, you know. He used to call his church the “hottest pulpit in the Bay Area,” and he was starting to capitalize on that. And I thought, it’s time for me to leave; I’ve been through this before.

knowledge to recognize both the problem and your own weakness. There’s a real danger of putting yourself in the position—as many therapists do—of seeming to be the person who’s gotten it all together. I break that up as soon as I see it coming. I try to work *with* people. I’m not just a witness. I try to be real.

BPF: As much as we espouse egalitarianism, I sometimes thinks there’s something very deep in our primate nature that wants a leader—you know, the head of the monkey troupe.

CN: I think it’s the child needing the parent. If you developmentally satisfy the stages of growing up, you get to the point where you don’t need the parent anymore, but that’s not true for most of us. We have incompleting childhoods, and we still want Mommy or Daddy.

BPF: Let’s switch gears now and talk about the Daily



The Daily Bread garden at Shenoa Retreat Center

BPF: Do you think this is an inevitable thing that happens in any spiritual organization that gains enough followers and becomes institutionalized?

CN: I think it’s inevitable in the sense that the temptations are there. But it’s not inevitable if you remain very humble and very aware of the dangers. The movement technique I teach is a kind of meditation, so I have the experience on a small scale of people projecting things onto me.

BPF: So people try to turn you into a guru?

CN: People will do that—intelligent, competent, healthy people. And if you can anticipate that, you can head them off at the pass. But you have to know that you *want* to head them off. You have to work on your own ego constantly. If you don’t do that, then yes, it’s inevitable to have the kinds of problems we’ve seen at various Zen centers and other spiritual communities. You get 50 people applauding you and wanting you to direct their lives, and that’s something to deal with. It’s power, and it’s hard to turn down. It takes a lot of self

Bread Project. What is it, and what led you to it?

CN: I got into it because I can’t stand waste, and I can’t bear the fact that people are hungry. I had the realization that food businesses throw out a tremendous amount of food, and people *need* that food. So I set up the most obvious and simple thing: a group of volunteers to pick up the discarded food and take it to food kitchens instead of it being dumped in the garbage. I put a letter to the editor in a local community newspaper, and 30 people called saying they wanted to help. We’re still doing it 11 years later, but it’s on a much larger scale now; we have about 100 volunteers. The idea has been copied all over the country, and we’ve expanded the concept. Our policy is to keep it simple, and very accessible. For example, we have milk coupons available at grocery stores; people can buy them at the checkout stand, and from the proceeds we donate about 600 half gallons a week to programs that feed the hungry.

Daily Bread also has a rice and beans program. Every six months we buy 5000 pounds in bulk from a

farmer, and we do a rice and bean bagging. It's like a quilting bee. A bunch of people get together for two hours and rebag these hundred-pound sacks into two-pound plastic bags. There's a lot of giggling and rice flying everywhere. Every week volunteers come and deliver the bags to the food kitchens.

We also have an organic farm out in the country at the Shenoa Retreat Center; last year, it generated five tons of produce from one acre. The design of the farm—which is a mandala—came as a vision to me and the head gardener simultaneously.

The garden is also a teaching garden, with six interns. They work the garden and harvest the produce, and the guests at the retreat center deliver it in their own cities. People are thrilled to do it. They see the inside of a food kitchen for the first time, and are moved, impressed, or horrified. And then they often commit themselves to do more. That leads to more people in the middle class becoming aware and getting involved. I think that's where my work really is—helping to raise the consciousness of the middle class. The group that comes to bag the rice and beans becomes a community, and they come back time after time. The sense of despair and disempowerment that so many of us feel is dissipated a little.

BPF: That sense of community is what many of us middle class alienated people are hungry for.

CN: We're lonely and lack a sense of self-worth. Women especially. It's an epidemic, and I think it's a first priority issue to address. We can change the political system until we're blue in the face, but that doesn't touch the problem of self-love.

BPF: And is the work you do your way of dealing with that alienation in yourself?

CN: Absolutely. The work I do in the world *is* my self work. I think it was Gandhi who said that working for others is an illusion. We always work for ourselves.

BPF: Working in the world and on the self are really the same thing.

CN: They *have* to be. There's such an attitude of self-righteousness sometimes with people doing service work: "I'm helping the poor downtrodden masses, and I'm above it all." But we're not above it. I love the Dalai Lama for insisting that he's just a simple Buddhist monk. God bless him for being a voice for humility who has people's ears and respect. I mean, just look at the mistakes some of the Buddhist teachers have made. I feel very angry with them because time is

short and our work is urgent. The influx of Buddhism into our culture is so important and so critical that we don't have time for arrogance. But on the other hand, the problems that have cropped up are the inevitable ones. We learn slowly, and it's probably going at the exact pace it has to.

BPF: Speaking of empowerment, do you involve homeless people in the running of Daily Bread?

CN: To some extent. We just made a homeless garden in town. We and the residents tore up the asphalt with pick-axes and shovels in a parking lot—which was no small task—next to the UA Homes, a residence home for people who used to be on the streets. We did the work in coordination with the Eco-City Builder's group, people in the neighborhood, and the residents themselves. It was one of the most fun times I've ever had. Everyone was there—kids, elders, women, men. We managed to get through the day without a busted head.

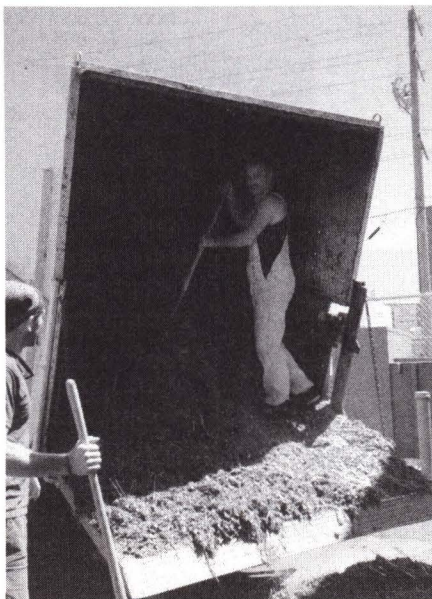
The following weekend we brought in soil from the American Soil Company, but when I tried to pay for it they wouldn't let me. This kind of thing brings out the best in people. And now there's a huge jungle of an organic garden. The residents maintain it themselves. They're so invested in the garden that if anything, it gets over-watered.

This garden is just one of many projects that Daily Bread has spawned. People seem to trust Daily Bread because it's proved itself over such a long time. As a result, when I get my next wacky idea, I've got some credibility in the community, so I can go out on a limb.

BPF: Is there a limb you're out on right now?

CN: Yes. We're going to build a straw house out of agricultural waste as a demonstration project. The rice growers in California are no longer permitted to burn their straw. Rice straw doesn't decompose very quickly, so they can't use it as mulch, and they're piling up these huge masses of straw. Connect this with the fact that lumber is becoming very expensive and the forests are dwindling. There is a very old house-building technique that was used on the prairies in this country, and in Scandinavia—using bales of straw as bricks. When these bales are stacked on top of each other they become like very thick, insulated wood walls. In fact, they're stronger than wood. You plaster them in so rats and water can't get in, and you have an extremely sturdy building material. And a whole big bale of straw costs \$3.50.

Our demonstration house will be a small shared



Unloading compost at UA Homes garden

dwelling, 1000 square feet. I just got these from the architect [she pulls out blueprints]. It's for two families who share a kitchen. We're trying to show that we can build a very small, very beautiful shared dwelling that's energy-efficient—you don't have to buy insulation—uses renewable resources, is inexpensive, and can be built by a group of friends. You just need one person to know how to do it, who can then teach a group of inexperienced people, and you can put up the basic shell in two days. This has big implications for housing for the homeless and in the Third World. We're going to share the plans and design ideas with Habitat for Humanity, who build houses all over the world.

*It's a spiritual necessity, an imperative,
that you have a good time.*

You know, I see all my work as the same thing. What I do in my meditative movement work is identical to what I do in Daily Bread. It's the same basic vision, which is to connect to each other and the cosmos in every way possible. With a kind of faith that, when you are aligned with the universe, the right things happen. People are healthy and happy and don't need to compete with each other.

The problem of despair is enormous these days. People feel helpless and hopeless. That depressed state will do us in sooner than any problems in the world. I do things which are basically pleasurable to me—singing and dancing, writing, designing houses—things that I love to do. It's service on one level, but on a much deeper level I'm being fulfilled and deeply empowered. All the garbage in the world can keep happening, but I'm still aligning with divinity. I think it's very important to do positive things rather than just fighting against the negative. If enough of us do that in our own little sphere, it's all going to add up and things will begin to shift on a larger scale. Basically, *everything* needs to be done. All one individual can and should do is what he or she loves to do most. If we all use 100% of ourselves, together we can make a change.

BPF: Instead of one big explosive change all at once.

CN: Right. That doesn't work. People have to get used to things bit by bit. I know what a slow process it is to change my *own* being. I keep sliding back. The same goes for the larger society; there's no way a society can change that fast and make the change stick. You do what you can, and enjoy it as much as you possibly can. It's a spiritual necessity, an imperative, that you have a good time. ♦

Janine Kenyon is an organic gardener and a voraciously curious Zen student. Jane Brecker is an angst-ridden student of various esoterica.

This Very Bell (cont'd from page 26)

shook me to the depths was the *Kristallnacht* in November 1938. For the first time, I saw what the Nazis were doing. It was hard to comprehend, their hatred of the Jews. Some of my friends suddenly spoke about Jews in a derogatory way. I said, what do you mean? These are friends, these are people. It was totally confusing to me.

World War II began on September 1, 1939, and my father had an industrial "accident"—but I don't think it was any accident—when he was visiting a factory on September 6; twenty tons of iron cut off his legs. For my birthday in August of that same year [she rings the bell] he had given me this bell—

BPF: This very bell?

NG: This very bell. I was with him for 35 minutes just before he died. He said he knew he would die, and he told me I would go through a very dark time. He encouraged me to help fight the fascism in our country, even though he knew it would be dangerous. At this point, the Nazis had already marched into Poland.

At this time I understood another thing: not to think vertically, but horizontally. From infinity to infinity. On that level I never had any difficulty in communicating with anyone. I had no judgment. In vertical thinking you're always comparing.

BPF: How might you meet a Nazi horizontally?

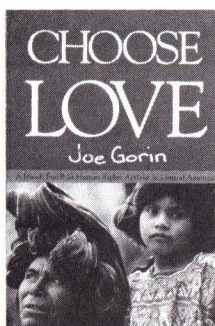
NG: Well, I think I must have a very simplistic mind. You see, I cannot have judgment of what someone else has done. I can't say you are bad. I *can* say, ah, this person is really not awakened, really disharmonious. That's how I looked on the Nazis, and that's what enabled me to act. Not out of judgment. Because foremost, I could not change any of that, OK? I was powerless. But I could change myself. I did not have to enter into the Nazi movement.

At the same time, I believe today, as I did then, that every being is capable of changing. Every morning before meditating I would say, "May my heart flower, may I be free from suffering, may I be healed, may I be at peace." That was the very thing that could give me some peace. Let my heart flower, let my friend's heart flower, let my *enemy's* heart flower . . . that gave me a foundation on which I could then act. And of course, I knew what the Nazis were doing was not right. One must not hurt sentient beings.

The principles I have always used in my life have remained absolutely the same: I sit, and out of that comes my commitment.

When I asked my father what is the meaning of my life, he would say to me, "You know, you will warm hearts. And when you warm hearts, they will open." That is the great task of this time and of this century. ♦

Denise Caignon is a student of Zen and a consulting editor of Turning Wheel.



*Choose Love: A Jewish
Buddhist Human Rights
Activist in Central America*

by Joe Gorin
Parallax Press, 1993. \$12.00

Reviewed by
Margaret Howe

My big ideas about Buddhist practice have been challenged. Equanimity and compassion are much more complex than I realized before coming here. Much of the anger and frustration I feel here is not opposed to compassion but arises from it. I daresay it would be more accurate to say that indifference and apathy, rather than anger and frustration, are contrary to compassion.

Such are the kind of provocative conversations with himself that we are privy to in this new book of Joe Gorin's. A long-time Vipassana student, Joe followed his heart to Central America where he came face-to-face with the challenges of "meditation in action." There are few books written about socially engaged Buddhism from such a personal perspective, and this one gives us much to chew on. To keep sane, to integrate his experiences, as well as to educate his friends, Joe wrote monthly letters back to the U.S. *Choose Love* is a compilation of these letters, and in the reading we are taken into his life and come to know him, the people of Central America and ourselves better.

Joe is a good storyteller and one is easily pulled into his descriptions of characters and events. Living first in Guatemala, he works for Peace Brigades International, accompanying labor leaders and human rights activists whose lives are at risk. Then he travels to Nicaragua and documents human rights violations during that country's civil war. Finally he returns to Guatemala and becomes part of the union organizing that has emerged as a key to change in that country. In his matter-of-fact way, Joe offers straightforward political analysis and—in a very personal way—shows us the deadly effects of U.S. foreign policy.

But this book is not simply a tale about the turmoil in Central America from the perspective of a witty, earnest gringo. He also offers insight into the process of bringing Buddhist practice into the unpredictable, dangerous realm of the Central American struggle.

For many hours in the meditation hall, I learned to observe what is present in consciousness without identification or a knee-jerk reaction. The conditioned response to danger is fear, but that is really just a habit of mind . . . but it is a lot easier to apply bare attention in the safety of a meditation hall than in the midst of death squads.

How can the miracle that occurs in the meditation hall serve a person confronting a genocidal general in Guatemala? What does a commitment to nonviolence look like when surrounded by persistent violence and powerlessness? While most of us do not live in such extreme circumstances, such questions are at the heart of socially engaged Buddhism, and the application of Buddhist practice and understanding to such a situation is a potent test of the validity (and difficulty) of practice.

Taking his Buddhist practice to *la lucha* (the struggle) of Central America changed Joe's Buddhism as it changed those he met. In fact, he had a bit of a reputation. While I was in the Rio Grande Valley on a delegation, I met a North American who worked with Joe in Nicaragua. This man, an expatriate cowboy, described Joe's ability to be centered during the most tense occasions. He found the meditation practice somewhat amusing, but he had a deep respect for the presence Joe brought to this violent, unpredictable setting.

Throughout his book, Joe is brutally honest about his failure to always conjure up compassion. Especially poignant is his response to a friend's assassination:

Seeing myself capable of taking a human being's life scared me to the roots of my being, and I could see how fear and anger might drive me to commit the very acts I have dedicated my life to combatting. It is easy and ennobling to feel solidarity with the downtrodden, but to sense identity with those committing injustices forces me to question how deeply held my values really are. I vow not to kill, and I also resolve to acknowledge my inner demons who don't share my vow.

In the end, Joe returns to the U.S. to pursue a relationship and a more conventional life, where perhaps most of us can most easily relate to his struggles. His comments however, may be disquieting for us householders:

I found it relatively easy to live a morally clean life in Guatemala and Nicaragua. Not so in the U.S. Just by being here, I enjoy privileges that continue to be won at the expense of others. . . . My years in Central America changed me. I am less ready to dismiss guilt as a neurotic condition (although it often is). Just as often, however, it is a moral condition. As a psychological issue, guilt is to be worked through. But as a moral issue, it can help guide one's life.

As I read *Choose Love*, I sometimes wished Gorin had provided a more thorough history of the countries he visited, and more Buddhist analysis. But this book is not a comprehensive political history nor is it about answers. Rather, it encourages us to revisit important questions about the integrity of our lives, our practice and the policies of our governments. It is also an invitation to push ourselves a little further down the path of socially engaged Buddhism. ♦

Margaret Howe is president of the BPF Board. She and her partner would like to start or join a community house of Buddhist social activists. If interested, contact her at the BPF office.

COORDINATOR'S REPORT

Enemies & Friends

... just like treasure appearing in my house
Without any effort on my behalf to obtain it,
I should be happy to have an enemy
For he assists me in my conduct of Awakening.

—Shantideva's *Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*

Dressing for work the other morning, I watched Yasir Arafat extend his hand in peace to Yitzhak Rabin. Enemies choosing peace in the White House rose garden. For the second time in a week, tears filled my eyes and overflowed—tears of joy and hope for the future, tears of sadness for so many lives lost and broken in a long, bitter struggle. Rabin was quoted the day before: "You don't make peace with friends, you make it with very unsavory enemies." Even grasping the necessity of reconciliation it sounds to me like he couldn't resist a last verbal jab. I can't help thinking this will be a very difficult peace to keep, jeopardized by painful history and by other forces in the Middle East who may themselves feel betrayed by such agreements. Still I am grateful and inspired by this moment. If Israel and the PLO can set aside differences, there is a possibility of change in our own public and private work. Sometimes peace amazingly emerges when tension and conflict are at the highest pitch, and people involved take a small backward step to see that violence and hatred are not bringing any relief. So it is important for us to keep turning towards peace even though we feel there's no progress or hope ahead. This is what Shantideva calls the practice of patience.

But patience is not suppression of feeling. It calls for true confidence in Buddha, Dharma, and most of all faith in Sangha. The week before last, 108 (auspicious number!) dharma teachers met at Spirit Rock Meditation Center and Green Gulch Farm near San Francisco for the first Western Buddhist Teacher's Conference. It was the beginning of an important new sangha for western teachers from the Vipassana, Zen, and Tibetan traditions. Over three days we created what the therapists among us called a "safe container," a strong bond of trust and fellowship where truth could be told and our own wounds revealed. As the meeting unfolded, numerous teachers shared deeply disturbing stories of sexual and power abuse at the hands of their own teachers. In this realm I have been too naive, and I wept along with my sisters and brothers for ourselves and for all the wounded who have turned from the path. There is much healing still to be done and resources to be created so all students will be able to speak their own pain, and not endure exploitation in the name of the dharma. BPF can help greatly in the process. I hope to say more about this in the next *Turning Wheel*.

Will Waters' work has graced these pages and our office for three and a half years, longer now than anyone

else on our staff. He is probably the only staff member who knows how everything is done at BPF's national office and how all the computer programs work. So we are sad to accept that it is time for him to finish his dissertation in Comparative Literature here at Cal and look for work in the groves of academe. I can't imagine replacing Will's intelligence, dedicated work, and light touch. I'll also miss just turning around at my desk to launch into deep discussion with him. I envy the students who will work with him in years to come. The staff, board, and members owe him deep thanks. Nine bows. ♦

— Alan Senauke

BOOKS IN BRIEF

by Alan Senauke

In April 1992, the Thai Democracy Movement ended the illegal rule of generals, at great cost of life and energy. Now those generals, under amnesty, are free to play golf and continue to amass great fortunes while our elder and teacher Sulak Sivaraksa is tied up in court, facing the serious charge of *lese' majeste*. *When Loyalty Demands Dissent: Sulak Sivaraksa and the charge of lese majeste in Siam* (Santi Pracha Dhamma Institute, Bangkok) is a detailed compendium of speeches, interviews, testimony, and letters in support of Sulak. It is an interesting window on his thought and activity, and of the baroque world of Thai politics. This book is part of Sulak's effort to raise funds for his defense. If you would like a copy, send a request and a donation for Sulak's case to BPF.

Race Matters, by Cornel West (Beacon Press, 25 Beacon St., Boston, MA 02108, \$15) is a play on words, but what truly matters here is no game; it is the fate of our society, deeply and bitterly divided along the color line. West, professor of religion and director of Afro-American Studies at Princeton, helps us see ourselves and our dehumanizing projections in these accessible essays that throw light on Black rage, nihilism, sexuality, Black-Jewish relations and more. His passionate, clearly-reasoned voice speaks with a spiritual confidence that just might enable us to hear the painful truth of our own lives and history.

His Holiness The Dalai Lama is coming into his own as a great spiritual leader, drawing together the threads of world religion into a strong, seamless cord of wisdom and compassion. Wherever he goes these days, huge crowds gather, drawn by his warmth, easy laugh, and keen intelligence. At this point he might even be as well known as Mohammed Ali. *A Policy of Kindness* (Snow Lion, P.O. Box 6483, Ithaca, NY 14851, \$10.95) is an introduction to the Dalai Lama's life and teaching, including essays by and about him. I particularly liked two brief pieces, "Living Sanely," and "A Talk to Western Buddhists." ♦

CHAPTER NEWS

After nearly 5 years of inactivity, the **Rochester Chapter** has dissolved. This was a sad decision, but in view of the lack of support from other Rochester members and local sanghas, it is the right step to take. Most of my energy is now being directed at building community and experimenting with new approaches to lay practice, which is, of course, engaged Buddhism. I will continue to be available in Rochester as an individual BPF member.

— *Bill Anderson*

BPF offers its deep gratitude to Bill for years of work—as a member, chapter contact, and board member—and for his continuing friendship. We also appreciate a generous donation of the chapter's remaining funds.

— Alan Senauke

Welcome to our latest BPF affiliate, the San Francisco-based **Gay Buddhist Fraternity**. GBF sponsors talks, retreats, and trainings shaped for the gay community. This is a rich resource here in the Bay Area, and a model for what can be done in other parts of the country. BPF affiliate status recognizes independent organizations with whom we share some central values and work.

Cherry Blossom BPF members (Washington DC) periodically staff a mobile food service that offers dinner to homeless people in Washington. A recent chapter meeting was billed as “Does the Chapter have a Self,” looking back at the year’s activities and planning for the future.

East Bay BPF members are taking a key role in the upcoming BPF National Meeting, along with friends from other Bay Area chapters. In August members organized a highly successful and edible waffle party to benefit the East Bay Sanctuary Covenant.

Yellow Springs Chapter sent a letter detailing this year’s activities. “The most exciting happening has been the formation of the nonsectarian Yellow Springs Dharma Center, conceived as a place to strengthen our community by providing a place for meditation practice. The Center will hold a daily nonsectarian meditation and offer space for meetings (including BPF), education, practices and sittings by our three traditions—Vipassana, Tibetan, and Zen.” Three students in residence provide continuity. The great and sometimes humorous challenge is how to harmonize the various traditions and personal preferences. Will they sit in rows, circles, rectangles, facing the East? The formal opening is Sunday, October 17.

Marin County BPF put out a nice newsletter, including a survey inquiring about members’ interests and needs. They are forming a Sustainability Study Group using materials developed by Helena Norberg-Hodge. Members are also active with Family Practice Days at Green Gulch and with October’s National Meeting. ♦

Renegade Bodhisattva (from page 29)

and alienated Buddhists. For me, this is the Age of the Sangha, and I use the term “Sangha” in its broader sense to mean the community of Buddhists, lay and ordained. Community life could be especially effective among American Buddhists for a number of reasons. There is a long history of community in the U.S., and there is also greater freedom and ease of expression here than elsewhere (especially Asia). But American individualism is a cause of social and emotional alienation, and community life can help to bring different kinds of people together into an effective life of practice and people-helping.

The democratic spirit at the heart of the U.S. can support Buddhist community life run by consensus. Hierarchy has its place, but it must be a *natural* place: the eldest and wisest should be the spiritual leaders by virtue and example, but a leader is only *primus inter pares*—first amongst equals. The idea of a patriarchal abbot or matriarchal abbess is an anachronistic shadow of oriental despotism (which Asian monasteries and temples still tend to preserve) and would certainly lead to problems in American Buddhism. Consensus does not come easily, even in a small community, much less a large one. Nevertheless, it is easier to work towards consensus in a small community. By a small community, I mean one in which everyone knows everyone else well (as in the early Greek city-state where democracy was born). This was also the case in the early Buddhist sangha.

We should all start off living in small communities and grow with them, and by a process of spiritual meiosis develop and spread with the message of the heart, head and hand to become a community of communities—a network. I am convinced that this is not only possible in America, but is actually happening now. We must be aware of this so that we are a happy part of it and share in its wholesome growth for our own benefit and the benefit of others.

It helps to be away by myself for awhile and look at my Malaysian community from afar. It is also good for the community to be on its own so it does not become a guru-centered group. And I find it refreshing to be able to speak here in the U.S. with greater honesty and candor. But somehow I don’t think I can run away from the task of being a teacher. That being the case, I hope that both my presence and my absence will be occasions for learning. But I still feel I am the one who is learning the most, and I am grateful to those who have made that possible. In my life now, scholarship is a Wisdom aspect, and social action is a Compassion aspect of Buddhism. I’m thoroughly enjoying being a lifetime learner, enjoying the best of the two worlds, so that learning becomes for me serious fun. I hope I can share the benefits of this joy with more and more people. ♦

Maylie Scott is a Zen priest and a social activist living in Berkeley, California.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & CLASSIFIEDS

Announcements

REFUGIO DEL RIO GRANDE offers hospitality in the Rio Grande valley to refugees fleeing persecution. It provides a place of rest to people who urgently need that refuge to consider the next step in organizing their lives. The Refugio is urgently in need of both courageous volunteers and money — money to buy mattresses, to build, to buy food, to keep the camp open at all. Please help: send checks or requests for more info to: Refugio del Rio Grande, P.O. Box 3566, Harlingen, TX 78551; or call 210/425-9416.

SULAK SIVARAKSA, Thai social critic and founder of the International Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB), is involved in what will certainly be a lengthy court case (see Summer 1993 *Readings*), and needs money for this purpose. If you would like to help, send a check payable to INEB and marked "Sulak/lese majeste." Sulak will be told the names of contributors but not the amounts; however small your contribution, Sulak will certainly feel grateful for it and be encouraged in this difficult time. INEB, 127 Soi Santipap, Nares Road, Bangkok 10500 Thailand.

VOLUNTEER M.D.'S AND NURSES are needed to provide outpatient care at the Tibetan Clinic, a small facility in Bir, India, administered by the Tibetan Government-in-Exile. Minimum commitment: 1-2 months. For information contact Barry A. Samuel, M.D., 655 Chetwood ST. #501, Oakland, CA 94610-1478.

BUDDHISM AND ECONOMICS, a working group that formed at the last INEB conference, is gathering material for ongoing dialogue and publication in a book. If you have information, resources, writings by yourself or others, please send them to: Nonnie Welch, 150 Downey St. #4, San Francisco, CA 94117.

INT'L BUDDHIST CHILDREN'S RELIEF PROGRAM seeks sponsors for needy children in Sri Lanka, India, and Chile (\$16/month). Contact them at 1511 Alencastre St., Honolulu, HI 96816, 808/593-6515.

THE GAY BUDDHIST FRATERNITY publishes an interesting and lively monthly newsletter, with information about their many activities in the S.F. Bay Area and longer articles on topics of concern to gay Buddhists generally. \$15/year. For subscriptions or more information, write GBF, 2261 Market St. #422, San Francisco, CA 94114; or call their recorded information line, 415/974-9878 (and leave a message if you wish).

NEEDS OF HOMELESS WOMEN AND CHILDREN. Do you have any of the following items to donate to a center for homeless women and children: soup/cereal bowls; silverware, especially spoons; socks; underwear; toiletries? For more information, please contact the Women's Daytime Drop-in Center in Berkeley at 510/548-6933, or call Thelma Bryant at 510/524-2468.

BUDDHIST BOOKS FOR PRISONS. Please consider sending dharma books you do not wish to keep in your personal library (and some you do!) to Prison Dharma Network, 155 Beacon St., Hartford, CT 06105-2927 for redistribution. BPF has also received a special appeal for books to be sent directly to: Pastoral Care, Westville Correctional Center, P.O. Box 473, Westville, IN 46360, and to Chapel Library, c/o Chaplain M. Yadron, Indiana State Prison, P.O. Box 41, Michigan City, IN 46360.

EARTHWISE: TOWARD A 500 YEAR PLAN is an eight-week study group meeting to envision an ecologically stable society and draft a 500-year plan of how to get there. San Francisco Bay Area. With Randall Hayes, Rainforest Action Network, and Judy Gilbert, BPF. Starts Nov. 17. Call Judy Gilbert to sign up: 415/488-1852.

CHUSHI GANGDRUG is an organization formed inside Tibet in 1958 to resist the Chinese invasion, and it was they who provided escort to the Dalai Lama and other Tibetans on their flight from Tibet in 1959. In 1960 with the support of American agencies, they established a guerrilla base in Mustang,

Nepal, from which to carry out raids on Chinese military installations. After 1974, according to the Dalai Lama's wishes for nonviolent methods, the character and role of the organization changed. Their aim is now uplifting the poor, needy and underprivileged within the Tibetan Community, above all the old, who have devoted the prime of their lives to achieving the aims of the exile Government.

In keeping with this mission, Chushi Gangdrug has made an appeal to fund the building of a home for 75 old & infirm Tibetans in Dehra Dun, U.P., India, and to establish a stipend fund for an additional 100 elderly Tibetans who do not wish to move to the Home. The two-year project will run to a cost of more than four million rupees. Please help! Write to Chushi Gangdrug Defend Tibet Volunteers Assn., 39 New Tibetan Camp, Majnu-Ka-Tilla, Delhi 110054 India.

Coming Events

THICH NHAT HANH is speaking and holding retreats in the L.A. area from Oct. 3-10, and the S.F. Bay Area Oct. 12-Oct. 23. For general information, call the Community of Mindful Living, 510/527-3751.

Tickets to Thich Nhat Hanh's talk at the Berkeley Community Theater, Oct. 19 at 7:30 PM, can be obtained by sending a donation of \$15 per person with an S.A.S.E. to: BPF, P.O. Box 4650, Berkeley, CA 94704. For more information on this talk only, call 510/525-8509.

Classifieds

INDIA, NEPAL, BHUTAN, LADAKH & TIBET — pilgrimages to remote Buddhist sites, exploring ancient monuments, monasteries, temples, dzongs, meditation caves, and the sacred domain of Mount Kailas. Meetings with traditional teachers, daily meditation, small groups. A culturally sensitive approach to travel, both spiritually and physically challenging. Insight Travel, 502 Livermore St., Yellow Springs, OH 45387. 800/688-9851, 513/767-1102.

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES in the Rockies! Unique degree program combines Ecology, Horticulture, Anthropology and Native American studies with Effective Action and Contemplative Training. The Naropa Institute, Dept. W, 2130 Arapahoe Ave., Boulder, CO 80302. 303/444-0202.

THE INFLATABLE ZAFU is actually an inflatable beachball inside a fine-quality zafu cover. Lightweight-Convenient-Guaranteed. Colors: Plum, Burgundy, Navy, Royal, Green, Black. Cost: \$21 postpaid. *Meditation supplies*. Free brochure. Carolina Morning Designs, Dept. BPFN, P.O. Box 2832, Asheville, NC 28802. 704/683-1843.

THE HARBOR SANGHA is a small Zen group in San Francisco. Our teacher, Joseph Bobrow, received permission to teach from Robert Aitken-Roshi in 1989. Weekly sittings are offered every Monday evening, and day-long retreats every other month. Beginners are welcome to attend. The opportunity to practice more intensively and do koan study with Joe is also available. For more information, contact the Harbor Sangha at 415/241-8807.

BUDDHISM IN THERAPY: Are you tired of being continually tossed away by conflicts, judgments, emotions, desires? Learn to use Buddhist principles and the practice of meditation and lovingkindness to help find the meaning lying within suffering. Robert Epstein, PhD, MFCC (#MFC22172). 510/548-1058. Sliding Scale.

POTALA TOURS & TRAVEL is a Tibetan Administration Joint Venture run by Tibetans in exile, providing jobs & training to Tibetan youth by offering package tours of Tibetan and Buddhist sites in India and Nepal. Earnings benefit Tibetan refugee communities. Specialties include Pilgrimage tours and Tibetan Herbal Medicine field tours as well as adventure travel & trekking. Brochure & price list available from: Potala Tours & Travel, 1011 Antriksh Bhavan, 22 Kasturba Gandhi Marg, New Delhi 110001, India. Tel. 3713309, fax 6461914.

TEACHING CIRCLE is a bi-annual journal by and for educators with a meditation practice. For more information contact Patrick McMahon, 2311 C Woolsey St., Berkeley, CA 94705.

GRATITUDE

The Buddhist Peace Fellowship Board gratefully acknowledges generous contributions above and beyond membership between July 1 and August 31, 1993:

Michael Attie ♦ David Aus ♦ Dimitri Bakhroushin ♦ Asoka Bandarage ♦ Rosemarie Barry ♦ Paul Berry ♦ Mary Bodecker ♦ Anjie Boissevain ♦ Virginia Bollero ♦ Shirley Bowmaker ♦ Neal Brandoff ♦ Linda Campany ♦ Paul Carignan ♦ John Castellini ♦ North Carolina Zen Center ♦ Beth Chinery ♦ Susan Clements ♦ Jerry Cohen ♦ Sybil Cooper ♦ Jay Copeland ♦ Clelia Corona ♦ Rachel Crosby ♦ Caroline Deegan ♦ Anne Dellenbaugh ♦ Render Denson ♦ Kathleen Dickey ♦ George Draffan ♦ Heather Dunham ♦ Deidre Farr ♦ Mike Fedel ♦ Richard Fireman ♦ David Foecke ♦ Jared Fogel ♦ Selene Gangtz ♦ David B. Ganse ♦ Jake Gibbs ♦ Jim Glass ♦ Kirk Gray ♦ Ann Greenwater ♦ Anne Greenwater ♦ Gary Grimm ♦ Paige Harbaugh ♦ David Haser ♦ Patrick Hawk ♦ Karen Heide ♦ Johnston/Hemphill ♦ Charlie Henkel ♦ Victor Hori ♦ I.B.C. ♦ Warren Jones ♦ Ronna Katsnick ♦ James Kempf ♦ Jill Korengold ♦ Roger B. Krohe ♦ Albert Kutchins ♦ Denise Lassaw ♦ Deborah Lebeaux ♦ Anthony Leitner ♦ Charlotte Coe Lemann ♦ Alfred Lockwood ♦ Joanna Macy ♦ Charlotte Mansfield ♦ Diana March ♦ Greg Martin ♦ Pam Meidell ♦ Jan Mikus ♦ Richard Modiano ♦ Mark Murphy ♦ Alan Oliver ♦ Daniel J. Olmsted ♦ Sandra Oriel ♦ Jon Pendleton ♦ Tom Pilarzyk ♦ Margaret Rader ♦ T. Ramage ♦ Gloria Reed ♦ Elizabeth Reid ♦ Hanna Sager ♦ Grace Sanchez ♦ Charles Schultz ♦ Mark Seabright ♦ Joyce Sebert ♦ Sybil Shane ♦ Lester Shen ♦ David Shen ♦ Tycho Speaker ♦ Sunray Meditation Society ♦ Paul Sprosty ♦ Lionel Staples ♦ Meredith Stout ♦ Brad Strumwasser ♦ Maureen Sweeney ♦ Nancy Tamarisk ♦ Eloise Van Tassel ♦ Katherine Thanas ♦ Rita Townsend ♦ Mike Vegher ♦ Louise Venetian ♦ Keith Voos ♦ United Way ♦ Nonnie Welch ♦ John Wenz ♦ Toby Wheeler ♦ Stephen Wilder ♦ David Willsey ♦ Judith Wright ♦ Kate Wylie ♦

For donations above and beyond the call of fundraising:

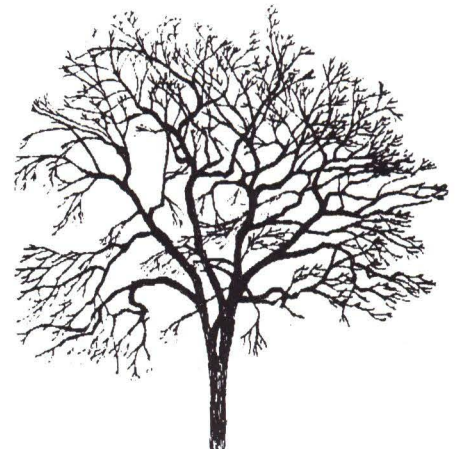
Hathaway Barry ♦ Mary Carnell ♦ Dennis Clagett ♦ Lucy Leu ♦ Rafe Martin ♦ Rochester BPF ♦ Lisa Rogers ♦ Jason Seaman ♦ Judith Stronach ♦ David Tapper ♦ Joan Ward ♦ Jonathan Woodbridge ♦

♦ Thank you! ♦

FOR SALE FROM BPF:

- ☉ Buddhist Economics: Living as if Interconnectedness Mattered. Tapes of Workshop with Helena Norberg-Hodge: 4-tape set \$26.
- ☉ T-shirts (blue or white) with black BPF logo: \$12. Specify S, M, L, or XL and desired color. (Supply variable.)
- ☉ BPF buttons, with our logo: \$1.
- ☉ Thich Nhat Hanh tapes: "The Practice of Peace" talk in Berkeley, April 1991. 2-tape set \$14.
- ☉ Sulak Sivaraksa talk: "Buddhism with a small 'b,'" Spring 1992: \$14.
- ☉ Thich Nhat Hanh letterpress broadside, beautifully designed, 6" x 12"; text taken from *Peace Is Every Step*. Suitable for framing. \$3 for first one; \$1 for each additional.

♦
Postage included in all prices.



BPF CHAPTERS & AFFILIATES

BPF National Office
 P.O. Box 4650
 Berkeley, CA 94704
 tel. 510/525-8596
 fax 510/525-7973

CHAPTERS

Cambridge/Boston BPF

Jim Austin
 43 Richfield Road
 Arlington, MA 02174
 617/643-2343

Durham BPF

Jackie Wilson
 1004 N. Buchanan
 Durham, NC 27701
 919/286-2005

East Bay BPF

Margo Tyndall
 88 Clarewood Lane
 Oakland, CA 94611
 510/654-8677

Los Angeles BPF

Christopher Reed
 247 Horizon Avenue
 Venice, CA 90291
 310/396-5054

Marin County BPF

Ken Homer
 or Wendy Johnson
 2901B Sir Francis Drake Blvd.
 Fairfax, CA 94930
 415/257-3059

Mendocino County BPF

Gail Deutsch
 P.O. Box 1490
 Mendocino, CA 95460
 707/937-3638

Minnesota BPF

Paul Norr
 2832 Coolidge St. NE
 St. Anthony, MN 55418
 612/788-7159

New York BPF

Amy Krantz
 115 W. 86th St.
 New York, NY 10024
 212/873-3142

NW Washington BPF

Matthew Jacobson
 1742 S. Nugent
 Lummi Island, WA 98262
 206/647-1160

Oahu BPF

Carl Varady
 2119 Kaloa Way
 Honolulu, HI 96822
 808/946-0666

Orange County BPF

Ralph McDowell
 P.O. Box 328
 San Juan Capistrano, CA 92693-0328
 714/496-1644

Pennsylvania BPF

John Sellers
 1808 Perkiomen Ave.
 Reading, PA 19606
 215/376-9581

Portland, BPF

Kathy Whitwer
 P.O. Box 14241
 Portland, OR 97214
 503/288-3641

Prairie Buddha BPF

Richard Quinney
 345 Rolfe Road
 DeKalb, IL 60115
 815/758-4310

Sacramento BPF

Steve Walker
 7211 Brookridge Ct.
 Citrus Heights, CA 95610
 916/725-3547

San Francisco BPF

Nonnie Welch
 150 Downy St. Apt. 4
 San Francisco, CA 94117
 415/664-3729

Santa Cruz BPF

Tom Misciagna
 610 Hanover St.
 Santa Cruz, CA 95062
 408/423-6769

Seattle BPF

Rick Harlan
 911 29th St. So.
 Seattle, WA 98144-3123
 206/324-4153

Sonoma County BPF

Tom Collins
 111 Fiesta Lane
 Rohnert Park, CA 94928
 707/795-0692

Tallahassee BPF

Ellen Gwynn
 2028 Chuli Nene
 Tallahassee, FL 32301-5872
 904/878-5796

Vermont BPF

Alison Gardner
 119 Buell St.
 Burlington, VT 05401
 802/658-2531

Cherry Blossom, D.C. Area BPF

Mitchell Ratner
 6814 Westmoreland Ave.
 Takoma Park, MD 20912
 301/270-3009

Yellow Springs BPF

Arida Emrys
 115 W. Center College St.
 Yellow Springs, OH 45387
 513/767-2191

Yuma BPF

Sally Sheridan
 1423 Pebble Beach Lane
 Yuma, AZ 85365
 602/726-9168

AFFILIATES

Australia BPF

Gillian Coote
 31 Bonnefin St., Hunters Hill
 Sydney, NSW, Australia

NEW!

Gay Buddhist Fraternity

2261 Market St. #422
 San Francisco, CA 94114
 415/974-9878

Int'l Network of Engaged Buddhists

303/7 Soi Santipap, Nares Road
 Bangkok 10500, Siam

Interracial Buddhist Council

P.O. Box 909
 Woodacre, CA 97973

Karuna Center

Paula Green
 49 Richardson Rd.
 Leverett, MA 01054
 413/367-9520

Network of Engaged Buddhists

Ken Jones
 Plas Plwca, Cwmrheidol
 Aberystwyth, Wales, U.K. SY23 3NB
 097/084-603

BPF NATIONAL BOARD

Melody Ermachild, Berkeley, CA
 Margaret Howe, Salinas, CA
 Sandy Hunter, Berkeley, CA
 Stephanie Kaza, Burlington, VT
 Kenneth Kraft, Haverford, PA
 Jack Lawlor, Evanston, IL
 Jeff Scannell, Freestone, CA
 Caroline Sinavaiana, Pago Pago, AS
 Diane Solomon, San Jose, CA
 Ken Tanaka, Berkeley, CA
 Pema Tashi, Palo Alto, CA
 Gordon Tyndall, Oakland, CA
 Joan Ward, San Anselmo, CA

BUDDHIST PEACE FELLOWSHIP



STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

- ◆ To make clear public witness to Buddhist practice as a way of peace and protection of all beings;
- ◆ To raise peace, environmental, feminist, and social justice concerns among Western Buddhists;
- ◆ To bring a Buddhist perspective to contemporary peace, environmental, and social action movements;
- ◆ To encourage the practice of nonviolence based on the rich resources of traditional Buddhist teachings;
- ◆ To offer avenues for dialogue and exchange among the diverse American and world sanghas.

MEMBERSHIP/SUBSCRIPTION FORM

BPF membership requires only a commitment to the general spirit of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship. Please see Statement of Purpose, at left. A year's membership & subscription to *Turning Wheel* (four issues) is \$35 for U.S. residents, \$40 elsewhere. Subscriptions help to support the work of BPF. (A low-income rate of \$20 is also available.) Please make checks payable to "Buddhist Peace Fellowship." Contributions are tax deductible.

For contributions of \$75 or more, we will also send you a copy of *The Path of Compassion: Writings on Socially Engaged Buddhism*.

I am enclosing a contribution of \$ _____ to support the work of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship.

Please send me _____ BPF brochures.

Name _____

Street _____

City, State _____

Zip, [Country] _____

Phone _____

BPF encourages members to join the BPF chapter in their area (or start one!), and to join the Fellowship of Reconciliation in their home country.

Buddhist Peace Fellowship
P.O. Box 4650
Berkeley, CA 94704 USA

Address Correction Requested
Forwarding & Return Postage Guaranteed

Non-Profit Organization U.S. Postage Paid Permit No. 413 Berkeley, CA
--