TURNING WHEEL
Journal of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship
Spring 1992 $3.00

"While the Storm Brews, We Take Tea" © 1983 Elly Simmons

Community: What is it?

RESPONSES (AND MORE QUESTIONS) FROM
Stephen and Martine Batchelor
Homeless Buddhists ❖ *Zen-Catholics*
Friends of the Western Buddhist Order
and other seekers

BUDDHIST PEACE FELLOWSHIP
P.O. BOX 3470
BERKELEY, CA 94703-9906

FROM THE EDITOR

What is community? This is the question I began with when first starting to work on this issue of *Turning Wheel*. But now, as this issue goes to press, I find myself asking: What *isn't* community?

If there's one thing I learned in guest-editing this issue — and I learned a lot — it's that community is right here, under our noses. Many of the contributors made this point: Stop looking to foreign countries or other situations for community. What's going on, *right where you are?* Who's right next to you? To live community is to respond to the joy and suffering in our own neighborhoods — as the Family Kitchen program does in Seattle. As the Western Buddhist Order does amongst the former "untouchables" in India. Community is anything and anywhere we allow it to be.

But it's a *sense* of community that we so often seem to long for in Western society. Our over-centralized, over-industrialized culture robbed us of that sense, and now we're trying to piece it back together, little by little. It's pretty poignant, really — so many of us trying to find our way(s) home.

I grew up all over the country. My father worked for a large corporation, which thought nothing of transferring its employees hither and thither every couple of years, families in tow. So we traipsed from Little Rock to San Francisco, Chicago to Kansas City. All that moving around spawned a certain restlessness in me, a wanderlust. (Gee, if only I could clone myself so I could live ten different lives in ten different places!) And too, I've always lived with a certain bittersweet homesickness — for *anywhere*. For everywhere. For home.

While my Zen practice is gradually, almost imperceptibly, becoming that home, still, my dream is to establish or join an "intentional" community of engaged contemplatives — people whose work in the world is of equal weight with their meditative practice.

So, I'm still asking: What is/isn't community? But these days, I'm trying to *live* the question more, not expect to get a final answer. When I try to focus on it as something outside myself, it eludes, it vanishes. But when I simply settle into the question, I find my community right here, close as my breath. We *are* community. It's not across the country. It's not a product of some situation I've yet to locate. When I realize this, in moments of clarity, it reminds me of something my mother used to say: "If it'd been a snake, it'd *bit* ya!" ❖

— *Denise Caignon*

P.S. Welcome back, Susan Moon! Tofu Roshi says you had a great practice period.

Please help prison practice

Readers are encouraged to buy gift subscriptions to *Turning Wheel* for prisoners. In the past we have given complimentary subscriptions to all prisoners who ask for it. Those of us lucky enough to be able to practice when and where we want to can share our fortune with our imprisoned sangha members. $25 buys a gift BPF membership for one prisoner for one year. Please make checks payable to BPF and earmark "prisoner subscription fund."

Next issue: Indigenous people and the Quincentennial

The **Summer issue** will be on the Columbus Quincentennial, colonialism, and indigenous people's rights. Deadline: May 18. **Fall issue** will be on Gay Buddhism. Deadline: August 17. Send articles, poems, artwork, letters to: *Turning Wheel*, P.O. Box 4650, Berkeley, CA 94704.

TURNING WHEEL

Guest Editor, Spring '92
Denise Caignon

Editor
Susan Moon

Consulting Readers & Editors
Miriam Queen, Patrick McMahon, Joan Tollifson, Alan Senauke, Maura Williams, Will Waters

Production & Design
Lawrence Watson, Denise Caignon, Thelma Bryant, Felicia Fields, Will Waters

Advertising Director
Will Waters

For advertising rate sheets, please contact the National Office

International Advisory Board
Robert Aitken, A.T. Ariyaratne, V.B. Dharamawara, Christina Feldman, Maha Ghosanada, Ane Pema Chodron, Mamoru Kato, Joanna Macy, Thich Nhat Hanh, Sulak Sivaraksa, Gary Snyder, Tenzin N. Tethong, Christopher Titmuss

National Coordinator
Alan Senauke

The Buddhist Peace Fellowship was founded in 1978, as a network of individuals and local chapters, 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 $4.00 postpaid from:

BPF National Office.
Box 4650, Berkeley, CA 94704
510/525-8596

© 1992 Buddhist Peace Fellowship

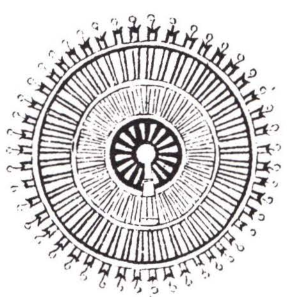
printed on recycled paper

Cover art © 1983 by Elly Simmons

CONTENTS

REGULAR DEPARTMENTS

Letters/4
Readings/5
Education Column/9
Ecology Column/11
Coordinator's Report/42
BPF Chapter News/43
Announcements and Classifieds/45



IRREGULAR DEPARTMENTS

Tofu Roshi Writes Home, *by Susan Moon*/8
Prison Dharma: The Dalai Lama Hat, *by Jarvis Masters*/10

THAILAND

International Conference on Buddhist Women, *by Sandy Hunter*/12
Thai Monk Fights to Save Rainforest, *by Will Waters*/14

SPECIAL SECTION: COMMUNITY/pages 16-41

A Conversation with Stephen and Martine Batchelor, *by Donald Rothberg*/17
The Wounded Sangha, *by Paul Shippee*/22
American Sanghas: Too White?, *by Cate Gable/23*
Owning the Disowned: a conversation with Maylie Scott, *by Denise Caignon/25*
A Community of Spiritual Friends: The FWBO, *by Denise Caignon*/28
Buddhism Touches the Untouchable in India, *by Manjuvajra*/29
The Realm of Tara, *by Dharmacharini Kalyanavaca*/31
Zen and Social Action in a Swiss Catholic Community, *by Maria-Christina Eggers*/32
The Family Kitchen: Catholic Worker Community, *by Ed Byrne & Donna Haroutunian*/34
The Breakfast Club: The Homeless Community, *by Michael Acutt and Susan Moon*/35
Always Failing, *by Lynn Lasalle-Klein*/37
Towards an Ecocentric Community, *by Bruce A. Byers*/39

BOOK REVIEW

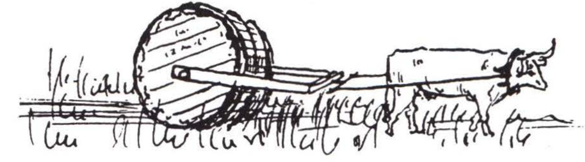
Charlene Spretnak's *States of Grace, reviewed by Marie Pace*/41

POEMS

Joe Maizlish/9
Kevin Bezner, 27

ART

Cover art by Elly Simmons
Patrick McMahon's homeboys/9
Deanna Forbes/11, 40
Elly Simmons/36
Dot Fisher-Smith/43



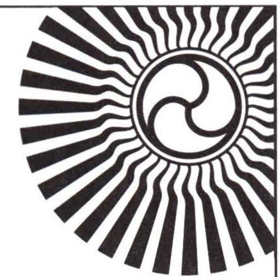
An invitation to come practice with us.

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



The new *SHAMBHALA SUN* newspaper goes beyond distinctions of religious and secular to bring contemplative wisdom to all aspects of modern life: livelihood and relationships, social and political commentary, new psychology and the arts.

Incorporating *The Vajradhatu Sun*, the new *Shambhala Sun* will also report on news and events of the international Buddhist world, with special emphasis on the vajrayana teachings of the Nyingma & Kagyu lineages.

Subscriptions for one year (6 issues):
$18 third class, $25 first class $28 Canadian & International
Mail check to: 1345 Spruce St., Boulder, CO 80302, USA
or call (902) 422-8404 for orders with Mastercharge or Visa

LETTERS

Dear Editor:

I was glad to see that you will be focusing on the gay & bisexual community within the Buddhist sangha [Fall '92 issue], but I must tell you also that I found your terminology offensive and abrasive.

If you wish to reach out to your gay brothers and sisters I do not believe you should be doing it with words like "queer." Where is the Buddhist compassion in this? Apparently it has been lost or hidden, because your announcement only offended me.

—James Fernandez, Miami, FL

BPF Response: *We have received several letters from readers who objected to our using the word "queer." We earnestly apologize to anyone who felt offended.*

Actually, we used the word because — at least in some circles — it is often used to be inclusive *of all people who don't fit the conventional model of "correct" sexual behavior or gender identity. This includes lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transvestites, transsexuals, and others. Many organizations that represent sexual minorities in the San Francisco area and elsewhere deliberately use the word* queer, *along with other words that are often used as insults by the general population (such as* dyke *and* faggot). *For instance, "Queer Nation" is a gay rights group active on both U.S. coasts. And in universities, "queer theory" is an integral part of gay and lesbian studies. The idea of embracing inflammatory words like* queer *is to consciously and deliberately detoxify them — to transform them from a source of pain to a source of (and name for) strength and pride.*

On the other hand, language is a very personal thing, and words refurbished by one group of people (especially urban intellectuals) can still sound like the same old slur to everybody else. We apologize again to anyone we may have offended; please continue to communicate with us about our use of language and send us your suggestions for alternatives.

Dear Editor:

Thank you for printing the article "Expanding our Borders" [Fall 1991 issue]. The authors ask exactly what I have asked from the time I first discovered Buddhism: why is there not more social action work in Buddhist communities? Coming from a Catholic background, where we were taught to love our fellow man and to help out when we could, I have found it so strange that Buddhist sanghas do not want to get involved in groups that defend religious and political freedoms of suppressed Buddhists elsewhere. For example, the U.S. Tibet Committee fights for the Tibetan people's right to practice their religion in Tibet. Yet a Tibetan Buddhist center

here would not even let me discuss it. I went to another Tibetan Buddhist center on behalf of the Tibetan U.S. Resettlement Project. My only plea was for old clothes, utensils, and furniture, but I was given the cold shoulder and informed that they usually did not get involved with other groups.

Maybe I haven't grasped this Buddhist world yet — or maybe I am still a confused Christian — but either way, maybe some day I will become enlightened about this!

—Beverly L. Dempewolf, New Milford, NJ

Dear Editor:

I was happy to read in your Winter '92 issue the stories by and about prisoners who are practicing the dharma. I applaud your conscious efforts to present a much fuller experience of life to your readers.

As of 1987 new federal guidelines were imposed that set minimum mandatory sentences and make very severe sentences the norm even for first-time offenders. But with a million inmates now, the prisons are at full capacity, and the projections are for a doubling of inmates by the year 2000. (85 percent of today's prisoners are serving time for nonviolent crimes.)

Prisoners are still a part of society, even though locked away. As Eugene Debs said so eloquently, "While there is a lower class I am in it. While there is a criminal element I am of it. While there is a soul in prison I am not free."

—Ron Fishman, Federal Prison #07680-054

[*Editor's Note: Ron Fishman asks that readers help change the present federal guidelines for sentencing by writing to: The Hon. Judge William W. Wilkins, Chair, U.S. Sentencing Committee, 1331 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington, D.C. 20004, Attn: Guidelines Comments Section.*]

Buddhist Peace Fellowship's

Meditation in Action Institute

July 5 - 11, 1992

Holy Redeemer Center, Oakland, California

Our focus this summer is "Practicing Community," with an emphasis on training and direct experience. What is the purpose of Sangha or community? How do we reconcile differences within & between nations, communities & individuals, using wisdom and compassion as our guides?

Invited teachers include Joanna Macy, Pracha Hutanuwatr, Robert Aitken, and Sulak Sivaraksa.

Please write us (soon) for further details:
BPF, P.O. Box 4650, Berkeley, CA 94704

READINGS

Dhamma Yatra: Walking for Reconciliation in Cambodia

A very tenuous "peace" prevails in Cambodia as a half million refugees begin to be repatriated, some of whom have been living in camps far from their homes for up to 12 years. Fear, mistrust, and factionalism are still facts of life for the Khmer people. Recognizing this suffering and the need to build unity and reestablish the place of Buddhism in Cambodian society, organizers have announced a Dhamma Walk For Reconciliation which will start from Aranyaprathet, Thailand in mid-April and finish in Phnom Penh one month later, on the date of the annual celebration of Buddha's birth and enlightenment (Vesak). Led by nuns and monks from Cambodia and neighboring Buddhist countries, including the deeply respected monk Maha Ghosananda, the walkers will meet with local people and hear their concerns. Each day a Bodhi Tree from Sri Lanka will be planted along the route to symbolize the seeding of Buddhist compassion, nonviolence and peace.

The walk is supported by the International Network of Engaged Buddhists and the International Fellowship of Reconciliation. It is being planned by the Coalition of Peace and Reconciliation (CPR), who would be happy to receive your one-time support for this act of national healing. To offer support, or for information, contact CPR at P.O. Box 1, Sanampao, Bangkok 10406, Thailand, phone/fax 663.726.9073.

Rochester Zen Center Makes Donation to Asian Buddhists

The trustees of the Rochester Zen Center in New York recently awarded $9,000 to three groups that work on behalf of Buddhists in Asia.

"Our members have become increasingly aware of the plight of Buddhists in several Asian countries," said Bodhin Kjolhede Sensei, abbot of the Rochester Center. "We recognize that there are many problems closer to home that still demand our attention, but it is important to expand our circle of identification. We belong not only to a local community but also to a world community. When we see other sangha members

OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO COMPASSION:
Facing Racism & Other Forms
of Social Oppression

A Weekend Workshop
Saturday, April 25, 9am-5pm
Sunday, April 26, 9am-1pm

RIGPA • 816 Bancroft Way • Berkeley
Pre-regis. & Info: (510) 644-3922

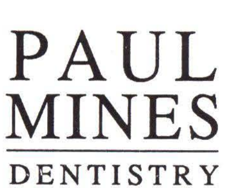
INCOME TAXES
INDIVIDUAL & FAMILY FINANCES
SMALL BUSINESS CONSULTATIONS

PEGGY DENIAL, EA
9175 POPLAR AVE COTATI, CA 94931
(707) 664-1064

LET US HELP YOU SPEAK YOUR MIND!

PA writes letters on your behalf on urgent national and global issues. You sign and mail them. Edifying newsletter included. Sample $1.

THE PERSONAL ADVOCATE
P. O. Box 3327-T ◆ Berkeley, California 94703



GENTLE DENTISTRY, FINELY CRAFTED IN A MEDITATIVE SETTING.
307 A SIXTH AVENUE
SAN FRANCISCO
415-387-2313

in acute need, it is natural to want to help."

The recipients of the grants were the International Network of Engaged Buddhists, the Buddhist Relief Mission, and the Khmer-Buddhist Educational Assistance Program. The Center hopes to establish a continuing relationship with each of the groups and to find other ways to support their work.

The Bangkok-based Int'l Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB) is already known to many readers of *Turning Wheel*. INEB brings together socially concerned Buddhists from around the world, provides training in nonviolent methods of conflict resolution, and supports the democratic aspirations of oppressed or displaced peoples throughout Asia. The Buddhist Relief Mission is spearheaded by two dedicated Americans who live in Nara, Japan. Every year they send or deliver much-needed medicine, clothes, and other forms of humanitarian aid to hundreds of Burmese refugees confined to Thai border camps. The Khmer-Buddhist Educational Assistance Program, administered from Amherst, MA, has sought to restore the nearly extinct Cambodian sangha by supplying Cambodian novice monks with educational materials in their own language. More information about any of these groups can be obtained from BPF or the Rochester Zen Center, 7 Arnold Park, Rochester, NY 14607.

—*Ken Kraft*

Dr. Ariyaratne Wins Peace Prize

BPF's elder and friend Dr. A.T. Ariyaratne, of Sri Lanka's Sarvodaya Movement, has been awarded the ninth Niwano Peace Prize, which carries an award of more than $150,000. Dr. Ariyaratne will donate the cash award to Sarvodaya to help alleviate poverty in Sri Lanka.

Meanwhile, Sarvodaya and Dr. Ariyaratne have been experiencing interference and harassment from the Colombo government of Ranasinghe Premadasa; the government and Sarvodaya do not agree on the best plan of action for development in Sri Lanka. Sarvodaya is the largest rural development movement in the country, reaching 10 million people in thousands of Sri Lankan villages.

Chittagong Hill Tracts Update

The government of Bangladesh was deeply embarrassed on March 19 by new accusations of major human rights violations in the southern Chittagong Hill Tracts, where the largely tribal (and partly Buddhist) population has been fighting for autonomy for the past 20 years.

The International Commission of Enquiry on the Chittagong Hill Tracts issued an update to their 1991 report "Life is Not Ours." The new information is particularly embarrassing for Prime Minister Khaleda Zia,

sworn in just one year ago. The Commission suggests that after a year in power her pledge to restore democratic rights has had little impact on the role of the army in the Hill Tracts, and it describes the military as the *de facto* ruler of the area. The army is reported to still be arresting tribals arbitrarily, with torture and rape of tribals still commonplace.

The accusations may put Bangladesh's aid income at risk. The World Bank is chairing a meeting in Paris, April 21-22, where donors will decide whether to meet Bangladesh's expected request for $2.4 *billion* in aid.

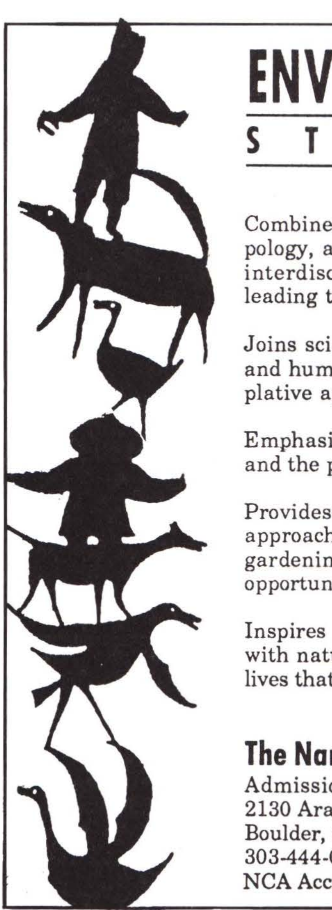
BPF highly recommends the update as a brief and readable summary of the troubled history of these peoples. For copies of the "Update on the Chittagong Hill Tracts" write to: IWGIA, Fiolstraede 10, DK 1171 Copenhagen K, Denmark; tel. 033.124724.

Buddhist Puppet Play to Appear at BPF Summer Institute

"The Unsurpassable Wisdom of Vimalakirti" is a life-size puppet show based on Robert Thurman's translation of the Vimalakirti Sutra and created by Alyse Rall and Patti Sullivan. The performance has already played to capacity audiences at the San Francisco Zen Center and Green Gulch Farm. One teacher in attendance called the performance "the most delightful presentation of the dharma I have ever experienced." Another student said, "The joy of being in this audience is to be in dharma culture, beyond practice."

The play begins with the Buddha and Shariputra discussing what teaching they should present to the assembled audience. Shariputra reluctantly agrees to help tell the story of an incident which took place at the bedside of the dying Vimalakirti. This renowned householder student had a reputation for expounding the dharma so forcefully that few of the Buddha's other students would visit him, even on his deathbed. The life-size puppets, their operators in plain view, enact the incident wherein Shariputra and Vimalakirti engage in a "dharma duel." The young Prince Manjushri puts in an appearance, as does a mysterious goddess who raises and resolves great differences when certain questions are raised about the gender of her incarnation. (See photo on page 16.)

The play will be presented at the BPF Summer Institute on "Engaged Buddhism and the Practice of Community" in Oakland, California on July 10. The performance will be open to the public. Please call George Lane at 415/383-1702 for more information. [For more information on the Institute itself, call the National Office at 510/525-8596, soon.]



ENVIRONMENTAL

STUDIES

Combines Ecology, Anthropology, and Horticulture in an interdisciplinary curriculum leading to a B.A. Degree

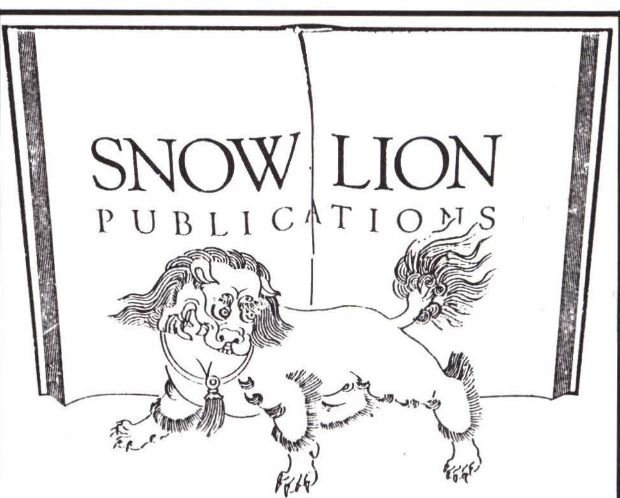
Joins scientific study of ecosystems and human cultures with contemplative appreciation of nature

Emphasizes environmental ethics and the perspective of "deep ecology"

Provides an experiential field-study approach, practical organic gardening experience and an opportunity for study abroad

Inspires a rich, personal relationship with nature leading to careers and lives that benefit the Earth

The Naropa Institute
Admissions Office
2130 Arapahoe Ave.
Boulder, CO 80302
303-444-0202
NCA Accredited



Established in 1981 to preserve and disseminate Tibetan culture, Snow Lion offers a FREE newsletter and catalog containing news, event calendar as well as hundreds of books, visuals, tapes and many other items from Tibet. Call or write us for a free copy:

Snow Lion Publications
P.O. Box 6483, Ithaca, NY 14851
Tel: **800-950-0313** or 607-273-8519.

TOFU ROSHI WRITES HOME

Dear Friends,

As some of you know, I am presently tasting the glamour and the gruel of monastic life at Tassajara Zen Mountain Center, and I thought you might like to hear about my experience.

I am enthusiastic about all aspects of the practice here except for this tiresome business of "sitting zazen." I have always felt that zazen was a waste of precious time — boring, at best; like being on the rack, at worst. Through clever manipulation of causes and conditions, I managed to become a Roshi without ever sitting through a whole period of zazen, and I certainly never sat a *sesshin.* When I was abbot of No Way Zen Center, I spent all of our *sesshins* giving *dokusan.* *

But my bluff has been called. Here there is no alternative but to spend hour after hour facing the sheetrock. I calculated (during zazen) that this so-called "practice period," (counting that brutal practice of *tangaryo* — five solid days of zazen, uninterrupted by bells, clackers, or gongs) includes the equivalent of 570 periods of zazen. The other day I could bear it no longer and I threw my *oryoki* set (three eating bowls) across the room. But immediately afterwards I shouted: "Like a tiger when she enters the mountain!" hoping the startled monks would think I was using skillful means to encourage their practice.

How have I survived all this zazen? These are a couple of things which have been helpful. I have always encouraged my own students to count their breaths, so I have attempted to practice what I preach. I have gotten up to 68,437. I have further calculated that a human life of 80 years will include approximately 12 billion breaths. If you figure out your average breathing rate, you don't actually have to count each breath, you can just add the appropriate figure to your accumulated total at the end of each day or even week. This frees up valuable time.

I also find it helpful to meditate with various mantras. Here are three of my favorites:

(1) As Master Bush Wak said to his disciple, Zaphu: "When the zazen gets tough, the tough get zazen."

(2) I ask myself, "What is your name?" I answer myself, "Tony Chestnut" (Toe Knee Chest Nut), bringing my attention up my body from my toes to my head as I say the name. This helps to keep my focus on my posture.

(3) "Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah."

I usually rest up between mantra repetitions by taking a little nap.

As a visiting Roshi, I have been asked to give a series of lectures here. I already delivered my classic talk on how to give up self-improvement, although I hardly need to speak about it. Just my simple presence is a living example of one who has clearly given up self-improvement. My next lecture will be on Zen and the art of flossing. On the last personal town trip I ordered a reel of dental floss for each monk. It is our practice to do everything together here, so we are incorporating flossing into the *oryoki* form. After dry cleaning our bowls with our *setsu* sticks, we all floss together. Before the servers bring the water around, they collect the used floss in silver bowls. ("Like filling a silver bowl with floss or hiding a heron in the moonlight.") The reel of floss fits nicely into the third bowl.

There has been an unexpected benefit of monastic life which I want to share with you. As you know, I was celibate for a number of years before coming to Tassajara. Now that has changed. I have found a companion to share my bed. Each night I hold her warm soft body against mine. Her name is Hot W. Bottle. I think her middle name is Wanda.

I hope your practice in Berkeley is going well. Keep flossing and don't sit zazen if you can possibly avoid it.

Your friend in the dogma,

Tofu Roshi

* Interview between Roshi and student

"Dark to the mind,
Radiant to the Heart."

Live Words

The traditional monastic training at Zen Mountain Monastery includes frequent Dharma Discourses (formal talks on Zen koans or other aspects of the teaching) by abbot John Daido Loori or talks by one of his senior students. This is a powerful way to receive the teachings, reaching a place beyond the intellect. For a full year you can receive these talks each month on cassette. Build yourself a library of "Live Words".

Energize your practice!
Subscribe to *Live Words*

In addition to one cassette a month, you will get the Buddhist quarterly *Mountain Record* and a home practice tape. All this for only $100. (USA). Tapes also available separately. Send for our free catalog.

Dharma Communications
PO Box 156-BPF
Mt. Tremper NY 12457
(914) 688-7299

Beeps & Stars

by Patrick McMahon

From John Wentz, who works in a state institution for the profoundly retarded in Woodbridge, New Jersey:

I work with very physically involved people with tested IQ's below 30, functioning at the level of infants below 6 months of age. I use Piagetian techniques to encourage each student to grow to the next level of development. One child had been a particular dilemma for me. Her legs are thin as toothpicks and scissored at the knees; her arms fixed, folded at the elbows, palms out at the shoulders, with fingers set so no grasp is possible. She is totally blind. My approach was to hook up touch and sound in a simple child's game leading to "beeping" her nose. I repeated the sequence with progressive sounds and gentle touches, beeping her nose, while observing for responses.

Each time I carried out the sequence, she would cry out, "Wha! . . Wha! . . Wha!" My heart sank — was I hurting her? We went through variations of the sequence for six months, with the same discouraging results. I was in a quandary. Finally, in frustration I "wha'd" back to her — at which she laughed deeply. Her little belly shook and tears flowed from her eyes, and she laughed again. I was shocked — she'd been responding to me the whole time, but I hadn't recognized it!

I will never forget this lesson in reverse imitation. Speak to others in their language, if you expect them to learn yours.

* * *

Yes: "Speak to others in their language if you wish them to learn yours." Recently a group of Japanese college students visited my grade school class. They were on a double mission — to put their textbook English into action, and to promote Japanese culture through ***origami*** (traditional Japanese paper folding). Turtles, cranes, and frogs came to life amidst a hubbub of broken English, halting Japanese, and kids' Americanese.

One group of boys — my loudest and rowdiest — were engaged with their Japanese instructor, Yuka, in a particularly animated conversation. The boys were showing her an octagonal paper "Ninja star." Ninja stars have been wildly popular in my class the last few months; some of my least academically inclined boys are the most adept at constructing them. I watched as the boys instructed Yuka step by step, showing her how the star could expand into a ring, or collapse into a solid pinwheel. She intently followed the movements of their skilled hands, and raptly listened to their patient explanations. When she made a star to their satisfaction, their faces lit up in a way I rarely see in the classroom. Someone took their art seriously!

I walked around the room to check on the other groups. When I returned, Yuka was showing the boys how to make — not frogs and cranes — but a Japanese star ("especially hard," she was warning them). Now it was ***their*** turn to watch her deft hands, listen to her terse directions. As I watched their heads bent together over the brightly patterned paper, all distinctions seemed to drop away — gender, nationality, language, tradition, age. Just this animated give and take remained.

Later the boys sent Yuka a letter through me.

Dear Padna (that means partner),

Thanks for showing us those radical oreo deals. Don't forget the fresh words we taught you. Say-yo-nara!*

Your homeboys,
Clarence, Richard, Jaimie

Below their signatures were pasted a Ninja star and a Japanese star. ❖

* Cool, neat, groovy

For Best Results

Cooking along now
In my fiftieth year,
I rechecked the instructions.
The last one read:
"For best results,
Meditate on resultlessness."
I hadn't noticed that one before.

—by Joe Maizlish

THE DALAI LAMA HAT

by Jarvis Masters

It was a beautiful day, and we were all glad to be let out of our cells on the San Quentin exercise yard.

"Hey Jarvis," Eddie asked me. "Could I wear your watch cap to take a picture to send to my little girl?"

"Sure! I don't see why not. Here —" I took the cap from my head and handed it to him.

"Thanks! I really appreciate it."

"You know," I said, as Eddie was fitting the cap on his head, "there's a patch that was blessed by the Dalai Lama inside that cap."

"Who did you say?" he asked.

"The Dalai Lama!"

"Who's the Dalai Lama?"

"He's a well known Buddhist priest — the highest priest in the Buddhist religion," I said.

"Is that right?" Eddie started to hesitate, looking puzzled — as if he was deciding whether he should keep the cap on his head.

"What's wrong?"

"Man. You ain't trying to put a hex on me, are you?"

I laughed. "No — if anything the cap will bless you. It may even brighten your smile. Since you hardly ever do, anyway."

"Man, you sure it ain't going to do anything to me? 'Cause I've never heard of no Dalai Lama."

"No, it ain't! Just take the picture, Eddie!"

"Man, OK! I'm going to take this picture — but if it comes out stained or distorted like it's been cursed, then you have to refund me with another one."

"OK! Just take the picture, Eddie!"

Minutes later, as the Polaroid picture developed in front of us, a nice smiling face appeared on the photo. Eddie couldn't believe it.

"Man!" he said, "Believe it or not, this smiling picture of me makes me look a lot more human than others I've taken in the past, don't you think so?" He handed me the picture.

"Yeah, it does. But I think you've always been human . . . you just have to feel it. Here." I gave him back the picture.

"Yeah, I'm going to take more pictures like this," he mumbled, looking at his photograph.

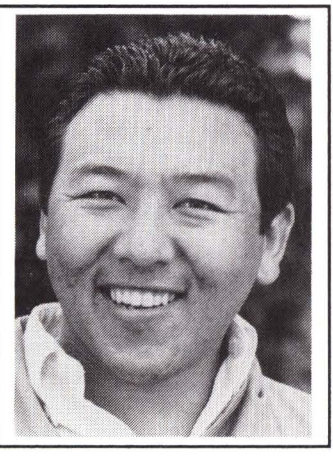
"Well, can I have my cap back now?" I asked.

"Oh, here you go," he said. "Thanks! Hey, what's that dude's name again?"

"Who, the Dalai Lama?"

"Yeah, yeah, that's him," Eddie smiled. "You don't think he made me smile, do you?"

Teachings with the Venerable Chhoje Rinpoche



Teachings in Austin, Texas
April 17 through April 23

Preparing the Awareness for a Proper Spiritual Vessel
April 29, 7:30 p.m., 222 Bowery St., New York City, NY

The Lineage of Padmasambhava
April 30, 7:30 p.m., 222 Bowery St., New York City, NY

The Essence of Mind: Sitting Meditation Practice
May 1, 7:30 p.m., 222 Bowery St., New York City, NY

Meditation on Emptiness
May 6, 7:30 p.m., Marin County, CA, location to be announced

Intensive Sitting Meditation Workshop
May 9 & 10, 10 a.m.-noon, 2-5 p.m., Marin County, CA, location to be announced
Teachings will be interspersed with periods of sitting meditation

The Venerable Chhoje Rinpoche is a reincarnated Lama and an Oracle. He was recognized by H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche and H.H. Karmapa as the incarnation of the previous Chhoje Rinpoche. ◆ Chhoje Rinpoche is a lineage holder of both the Nyingma and Kagyu traditions. He is a yogi and a scholar who received his training under the personal guidance of H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche, including the complete transmission of the Nyingma lineage. ◆

For further information: **PADMA SHEDRUP LING, P.O. Box 117, Fairfax, CA 94978 (415) 485-1356**

"Why?"

"Well I don't know," he said, still staring in surprise at the photograph of himself. "It's just that my smile looks a lot more genuine than what I was thinking before I took the picture."

"And what was that?"

"Oh, that I was going to be hexed by wearing your cap!"

We both laughed. ❖

Jarvis Masters is a frequent contributor to Turning Wheel. *He writes from Death Row at San Quentin Prison and can be contacted at: C-35169, Tamal, CA 94974.*

Deanna Forbes

Earth Summit Preparations Heat Up

by Stephanie Kaza

While America wrings its hands about the economy, and the U.S. media analyzes every presidential primary, the rest of the world is preoccupied with concerns about global resources. Increasing population pressures, precarious food security, and the powerful ideology of capitalism are raising the stakes on the international agenda. At risk is the precious evolutionary gift of a habitable planet.

This March, the Preparatory Committee for the United States Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) met in New York for the final negotiations before the Brazil Earth Summit in 1992. The tensions between developing countries and the United States were often palpable. For most of this century, the smaller, primarily Southern hemisphere nations that are on the receiving end of U.S. aid have been caught in a relationship of dependence and colonization through unfair trade agreements. Burdened with enormous debts and decades of resentment, these countries are now speaking out against the industrialized North.

One point of contention in the continuing dialogue is global warming and the pressing need to drastically

KARMA TRIYANA DHARMACHAKRA

SPRING/SUMMER SCHEDULE

APRIL 24-26
SHINAY INTENSIVE
$30. Members $20.

MAY 22-24
BASE, OBJECT, AGENT
AND RESULT OF PURIFICATION
Khenpo Karthar Rinpoche
$50. Members $40.

MAY 25
ANNIVERSARY PICNIC

MAY 30-31
FOURTEEN ROOT SAMAYAS
Khenpo Karthar Rinpoche
$50. Members $40.

JUNE 13-14
REFUGE VOWS
Khenpo Karthar Rinpoche
$30/weekend

JUNE 20-21
LAY PRECEPTS
Khenpo Karthar Rinpoche
$30/weekend

JUNE 27-28
BODHISATTVA VOW
Khenpo Karthar Rinpoche
$30/weekend

JULY 3-12
GURU YOGA OF MARPA
Khenpo Karthar Rinpoche
$200. Members $160.

24-26
INTERDEPENDENT ORIGINATION
Khenpo Karthar Rinpoche
$50. Members $40.

30-AUGUST 2
RELATINGTO DHARMA PROTECTORS
Khenpo Karthar Rinpoche
$50. Members $40.

KARMA TRIYANA DHARMACHAKRA
WOODSTOCK, NY 12498

For general information about
Karma Triyana Dharmachakra and its
affiliate centers call 1-800-TIBETAN

reduce carbon dioxide emissions. Europe has led the way in pledging specific timetables for reduction, but the United States refuses to be pinned down. The Southern nations, under pressure to stop burning and cutting rainforests, will not sign an agreement unless it includes a clear commitment from the U.S., which is widely regarded as a profligate producer of waste and industrial carbon dioxide.

In a recent paper by Greenpeace, the group asserts that President Bush and his senior advisors are seriously out of touch with today's world. Whether through naivete, arrogance, or recessionary myopia, the U.S. leadership does not seem to see how the U.S. and its consumer habits are perceived by others. Far from offering creative and dynamic environmental leadership, Bush has hardly even considered the significance of the Earth Summit '92 and as of late March was still uncommitted to even attending the conference.

In this election year, as the old-growth Northwest forests disappear and the weather reaches new extremes in unpredictability, we have to ask ourselves whether the current U.S. political leadership truly represents what the people of this beautiful land are willing to do to sustain life on this planet. If our vision and intention is more life-sustaining than our heads of state, we must let our voices be heard. The Earth Summit is a call to commitment for each of us, a chance to move towards a response of equity and restraint on behalf of all beings. ❖

The Road To Hell Is Bounded By Bodhisattvas

by Sandy Hunter

My guidebook described the highway going east-west through Bangkok as a "road to hell." It is huge, with odd chunks of road bitten out by mechanical equipment; cars dodge in and out of lanes as if their drivers were fleeing from Satan. Reminded me of Japanese horror movies that feature the Tokyo populace running for their lives from huge sea monsters.

Last fall, at least, this "road to hell" was bounded by bodhisattvas.

East of Bangkok, the highway brings you to the Rangsit Campus of Thammasat University. In late October 1991 this was the site of the first International Conference on Buddhist Women with 200 participants from 27 countries. Planned by the international Buddhist women's organization, Sakyadita, this historic meeting brought Buddhist women together to learn from and support one another. It also sought to improve the position of nuns in countries where they cannot be ordained, and are thought not capable of enlightenment.

One of the hallmarks of this meeting was "unity in diversity." Appropriately, a major paper was delivered by Ven. Karma Lekshe Tsomo (who arranged the first conference for Buddhist nuns in 1987), detailing the situation of Buddhist women (primarily nuns) in various countries. It became evident that Western women are used to an egalitarianism that many Asian women do not enjoy. Here is the situation for Buddhist women in Asian countries:

Burma, Sri Lanka, Thailand: Women cannot be fully ordained as bhikshunis (nuns), and thus have absolutely no decisionmaking power. In some places, a few women are honored as Dharma teachers and can study religious texts, but the overall position of religious women is one of low prestige, and decent housing and even food may be hard to come by.

Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam: Buddhism itself is seriously threatened because of war and political unrest. Many Cambodian nuns live in refugee camps on the Thai border, where they have been brutalized by wartime experiences and have had little access to education. In Vietnam, many nuns were killed during the war or disrobed in its aftermath. There is currently a resurgence of women entering religious life, although the sheer struggle for existence means they have little chance for education.

Japan: There is a long history of female ordination in Japan, and nuns and laywomen form the backbone of religious activity. However, it is still believed that women's spiritual practice is less "potent" than men's.

Korea: There are several thousand ordained nuns and several thousand novices. The monastic order is male-dominated, so Korean nuns have formed their own association. There are increasing educational opportunities for women, and nuns are taking an active role as teachers.

Taiwan: Here Buddhist nuns are taking the lead in Asia. Ordination is available. Buddhist laywomen and nuns exert much influence, more women are entering monastic life than are men, and they tend to be younger and better educated than the men.

Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines: Nuns spring from the ethnic Chinese communities within these countries. Many are very isolated, with little education.

Tibet: Although Tibetan Buddhism has a strong history of inspired women teachers, women's role is considered subordinate and many women have not received even basic education. Currently, educational opportunities are improving for both lay and ordained women.

Nuns and laywomen from most of these traditions (as well as from other Asian and Western countries) were present in Bangkok. Conferees took part in small, international discussion groups. In my group there were nuns from Germany, Australia and Thailand as well as laywomen from Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and

Germany. I was the only American. The facilitator did a magnificent job with the huge variation in understanding we brought. We listened to each other with respect and acceptance. There was no need to argue or find resolution to our differences.

To illustrate the position of Buddhist women in Asia, I would like to tell you about one remarkable bodhisattva, the Ven. Voramai Kabilsingh, the first ordained Thai woman.

Early one morning about 100 of us boarded buses and traveled down the "road to hell" west of Bangkok to Wat Songdhamma-Kalyani, a religious center created for women by Ven. Voramai Kabilsingh.

Inside the complex, we found the Ven. Voramai Kabilsingh sitting flanked by nuns from Germany, Taiwan, and Korea. Each of us came forward on our knees, bowed to receive the Venerable's blessing, were introduced and handed mala beads by her daughter, Chatsumarn (who was also the coordinator of our conference). Voramai, now 83 years old, looked at us fondly with dark, intense eyes. What an honor to be seen by those eyes!

Portrait of Voramai Kabilsingh

She was born in 1908, the youngest of six children. As a girl she worked in a department store to earn money for her schooling, eventually obtaining a certificate to teach in primary school. At 25, as the only woman accompanying five boy scouts, she gained notoriety by bicycling 29 days to Singapore. Her purpose, she said, was to prove that a woman was as capable as a man.

In 1942, when the Japanese appeared to be winning World War II, there was a rumor that they would force 200 educated Thai women to marry Japanese men in order to breed superior children. An unmarried teacher, Voramai stood a good chance of being included, so she quickly married a long-time suitor.

After the war and its economic dislocations, Voramai resigned her teaching post and started a jewelry business to help support Chatsumarn and four adopted children. Eventually she moved to Bangkok, leaving her husband in southern Thailand. She became a single mother supporting several children.

Voramai had had a near-death experience as a young woman and in 1955 had to undergo surgery. These experiences reinforced her interest in spirituality and meditation. She started a Buddhist monthly magazine which was still being published in the '80s.

In 1956 she took precepts with a well-respected monk of the Thai sangha. She chose to wear light yellow robes to distinguish herself from the existing white-robed nuns, called *mae ji* (who could not be ordained). *Mae ji's* were usually poor, uneducated, and looked down upon. Voramai had once seen a *mae ji* driven out of an eating house for begging. She believed that Buddhist nuns should be able to *help* the poor and needy, not themselves be viewed as poor and needy. The sangha originally did not accept these yellow robes but eventually was persuaded to do so by Voramai's teacher.

After her ordination, Voramai continued with the magazine, and at the same time started a school for nuns to give them primary education and knowledge of Buddhism. In 1957 she bought land west of Bangkok and started to build Songdhamma-Kalyani, the only temple in Thailand built by women for women. She also started an orphanage and school for poor children.

Voramai wanted higher ordination, but every Thai monk told her that the order of bhikshuni was extinct. In 1960 she went to India by herself and requested direct ordination from Lord Buddha under the Bodhi tree at Bodh Gaya, spending two weeks in meditation. A few years later, her daughter Chatsumarn was preparing a thesis on bhikshuni ordination and discovered that the current Chinese lineage was valid for a Thai because it was transmitted from the Theravadin tradition in Sri Lanka. In 1971 mother and daughter went together to Taiwan where Voramai received full ordination from Ven. Master Tao An and twelve other masters and monks.

Voramai Kabilsingh has never been officially accepted by the Thai sangha. She is, however, deeply honored in Thailand and her courage and wisdom provide a strong model for Buddhist women everywhere.

Voramai's influence was directly felt at the conference. One of the major accomplishments of this historic meeting was the growing intent of many Thai *mae ji* attendees to establish a bhikshuni order in Thailand.

Perhaps the most important result of the conference is the sense we took with us that we belong to a world community of women, many of whom struggle against incredible odds to learn about and follow the Dharma. It is exciting too to know that there are several women leaders who regularly cross international boundaries to support this community.

The Second International Conference, planned for 1993, is to be held in Asia or Europe. I hope many U.S. women will have the opportunity to attend and share this world community. ❖

Sandy Hunter lives in Berkeley, where she is active with the East Bay Chapter of BPF, and with the Sanctuary Movement.

Monk Seeks Pickup to Catch Tree Poachers

Thai monk Phra Prachak has been trying to save Thailand's forests, particularly the great Dong Yai forest preserve in northeastern Thailand. But local police and administrators oppose him at every turn, seeking profit from the clearing of (officially protected) forest land.

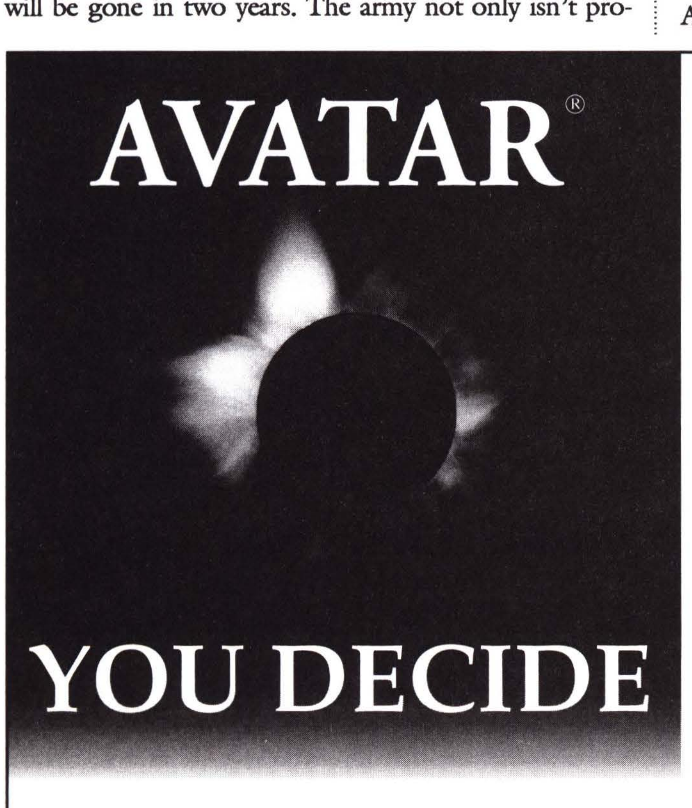
Last August, the monks caught some poachers red-handed in the act of cutting trees and persuaded them to give themselves up to the police. The police, however, released the poachers and redoubled their efforts to get Phra Prachak and his "monk patrols" out of the forest. This incident led directly to Phra Prachak's second arrest.

Now the poaching has begun again. Using just push-carts and two-person hand saws, poachers are able to cut 8-10 trees per night. At this rate, Dong Yai Forest will be gone in two years. The army not only isn't protecting the forest, but is suspected to be paying the poachers $20 per tree. The poachers are very poor farmers already displaced from their land, who can make more money cutting trees than they can working on other farmers' land. They still respect the monks, and even bring them offerings on the same hand-trucks they use to carry logs out of the forest.

Phra Prachak's monks and nuns go on patrol every day to assess the damage to the forest, photograph the cut trees and poachers, and talk to the poachers. They set out at 6 AM, return at 11:30 AM just in time to take their one daily meal, which must be eaten before noon — and in that time they have covered only a quarter of the necessary territory.

This patrol work would be much more effective if they had a pickup truck and a few walkie-talkies. The total cost would be $16,000 (400,000 baht). If 352 Westerners give $25 and 360 Thais give 500 baht each, this goal is easily achievable.

Send contributions to: Phra Prachak Kuttajitto, Tudongstan Nam Phud, Cog Mamuing, Aonphur Prakam, 31220 Buriram, Thailand. ❖



Avatar Courses for Peacemakers and Caregivers
May 9-16, Marin County, California &
June 13-20, Boulder, Colorado

Now you can end struggle and separation. You can emerge from behind the eclipse of a lifetime of limiting beliefs. Beliefs determine experience.

Avatar, an eight-day course, based on perennial wisdom and modern mind technology, gives you state-of-the-art tools to create the beliefs you choose and discreate the beliefs that no longer serve.

Avatar is a powerful transformational process for spiritual and psychological integration. You can create your life deliberately or let it unfold by default. You decide.

Licensed Avatar Leaders:
Barbara Meier (303) 442-7267 or 800/487-6988 &
Steve Winfield, M.Ed.(415) 459-7101 or 800/748-6912

Barbara is a painter and poet who has been involved for many years in the peace and ecology movements. She has practiced Buddhist meditation since 1967 and has been on the board of directors of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship; she has also directed international peace conferences for BPF, Naropa Institute and Thich Nhat Hanh.

Steve is a musician and past managing director of the Insight Meditation Society. He has worked as a psychotherapist, a stress management consultant and is known nationally for his workshop, Caring *for the Caregiver*, an empowerment process for health workers, helpers and social activists.

Avatar

PHOTO: ECLIPSE FROM MEXICO, 1970, NATIONAL CENTER FOR ATMOSPHERIC RESEARCH/NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
AVATAR IS A REGISTERED TRADEMARK OF STARSEDGE, INC.

GRACE PRODUCTIONS

CULTIVATING EMOTIONAL WISDOM

Daniel Goleman & Tara Bennett-Goleman

Tara Bennett-Goleman, M.A., *is a psychotherapist, teacher, and practitioner of meditation for over twenty years. She leads workshops on the integration of mindfulness and psychotherapy; on meditative arts; and on clinical relaxation. Co-author of* The Relaxed Body Book, *Tara has a private therapy practice in New York City and Massachusetts.*

Tara Bennett-Goleman and Daniel Goleman

Daniel Goleman, Ph.D., *is a psychologist who covers the behaviorial sciences for* The New York Times. *A long time student of vipassana meditation, he has written extensively on meditation paths and the implications of Buddhist psychology on the West. He has written* The Creative Spirit, The Meditative Mind, *and* MINDSCIENCE, *a dialogue between HH The Dalai Lama and a group of Harvard scientists.*

"These are two of the most beautiful people we know, and one of the strongest relationships. If there is anything in your heart that draws you towards conscious relationship, these are are two of the finest examples, and best teachers of that process."

Stephen & Ondrea Levine

As longtime committed partners and meditation practitioners, Dan and Tara are in a unique position to reflect on cultivating emotional wisdom in ourselves, and our relationships. Mindfulness — the observing power of awareness — can help us investigate the habitual emotional patterns that cause suffering. This workshop will explore ways to free ourselves from repetitive patterns that play out in our work, daily life, and intimate relationships. Join us for their first West Coast workshop in eight years.

MAY 16 & 17, 1992 10-5pm Cost: $120

1500 BUTTERFIELD DR., SAN ANSELMO

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL
GRACE PRODUCTIONS (415) 753-5755
This weekend is open to all, meditation experience not required

________ *I would like to attend the weekend May 16 & 17 for $120*

Enclosed is check # ____________ *in the amount of* ____________

Send confirmation info and ticket(s) to: ____________________

Address ____________________

City ____________ *State* ______ *Zip* ______

Mail payment and this form to:

GRACE PRODUCTIONS, 1615 24th Avenue San Francisco, CA 94122

Refunds — We must receive a written request at least 1 week prior to the workshop. A $15 processing fee will be charged for ALL refunds.

Special Section —

C · O · M · M

Community: What is it? In this special section, members of communities and sanghas — Buddhist, Catholic, nonsectarian — talk about the day-to-day joys and pains of their life with others. Many are involved in some kind of social action or service work. All make note of the rich and multi-textured nature of community life. But you won't find starry-eyed "let's just love each other" idealism in these offerings. Rather, you'll see, as one contributor calls it, the "nitty-gritty, committed family work" of putting one's ethical and spiritual values to the ultimate test — humanity.

The topic of community lends itself to homey conversations in people's living rooms (as one BPF staffer said, this issue should be hummed to "folk rap" music); many of the articles are excerpted from transcribed interviews.

This won't be the last you'll hear from BPF about community. The BPF Summer Institute this year is entitled "Practicing Community," and it'll be a chance to engage in some serious exploration of that nitty-gritty family work. (Call or write us for details.) Hope to see you there.

A motley sangha, indeed.
(See page 7 for story on these real-life puppets, who will appear at the BPF Institute this summer.)

U · N · I · T · Y

Sangha East and West —

The Dynamics of Buddhist Community

A conversation with Stephen and Martine Batchelor

By Donald Rothberg

Stephen and Martine Batchelor are writers, translators, and teachers currently living at Sharpham House in Devon, England. Stephen was for many years a monk in the Tibetan and Korean Zen traditions and has written and translated several books on Mahayana Buddhism. His latest book is The Faith to Doubt: Glimpses of Buddhist Uncertainty. *Martine lived in Korea as a Zen nun for ten years and is the translator of her teacher Master Kusan's book,* The Way of Korean Zen. *They lived in the Sharpham North community discussed in the interview for seven years, and continue to teach and work with the Sharpham educational programs, as well as elsewhere in Devon and in Europe. Scoby Beer and Mary Anne Clark helped with transcribing this interview.*

BPF: Why is spiritual community important for you?

Martine: My Zen teacher, Kusan Sunim, used to say that there are three important things: the place, the teacher, and the good friends. As Buddhists, we speak of taking refuge in the Triple Gem — not only in the Buddha and Dharma, but also in the Sangha. It's very important to your spiritual well-being to have people with whom you share the same values and aspirations, so that you're not just alone out there.

Stephen: The emphasis on community, on sangha, is an extraordinarily central one in Buddhism. Practice always takes place as part of a much broader context. This context is found both within the immediate support community of other practitioners and, in a more extended way, in a recognition of how your practice is interconnected with others — how it reflects a wider nexus of relationship to life as a whole.

BPF: How did the notion of sangha evolve? Why did the Buddha conceive of a community of practitioners, rather than following the model of the solitary, wandering yogi?

MB: After the Buddha awakened under the Bodhi tree, his first thought was, "I can't teach anybody. Nobody is going to understand this." As the legend goes, Brahma came down and said, "No, no! There are some people with just a little dust in the eyes; you should be able to teach them." And he thought, "Well, I'll give it a try." So he went over to the six people with whom he had been practicing. As soon as they saw him, they bowed to him, and that's how the sangha began. I don't think he had the grand idea to make some big Buddhist monastic community; he wanted his monks to wander about, not stay in one place, because he saw the danger of becoming too settled. But then his followers became very numerous, and rich people gave them gardens in which to settle. In this way the community started. Then the Buddha's auntie wanted to become a nun. At first he was against it, but finally he was convinced by Ananda, and so the nuns' community came into being. What is interesting is that he didn't have a grand master plan, but according to the circumstances, things just happened and he responded in the way he thought best.

We can see that flexibility again when Buddhism went to China; things developed according to the practical sense of the Chinese and the historical circumstances. For instance, at one point they decided to work in the fields, which was actually against the rules in India.

SB: This is something that we need to look at when considering forms of adaptation in the West — that in an important sense we are not innovating when we develop new forms here. One is simply continuing a tradition of adaptation that has characterized the evolution of the Buddhist community throughout the last two thousand years.

BPF: And many factors — social, political, and cultural — might influence these adaptations.

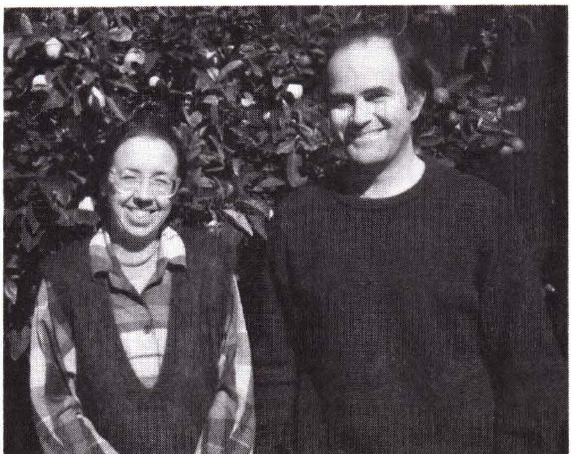
MB: Even the weather patterns. In India, monks were allowed only three pieces of clothing, and they were not supposed to eat in the evening. But in China, the temperature might drop to 0 degrees Fahrenheit and be very frigid; it would be necessary to have more than three pieces of clothing and important to eat more. So a tradition of taking "medicine" rice in the evening began.

Another example: In India, monks wore yellow robes, but in China that color dye was not available, so they used charcoal, producing gray robes.

SB: Flexibility has largely been a Mahayana phenomenon. The Vinaya, the original monastic rules that defined the early community, were about correct forms of dress, speech, and so on. But the Mahayana Bodhisattva vow qualifies these rules; it has to do with an attitude of compassion towards life as a whole rather than adherence to a legalistic code. There is actually a term that the Mahayana adopted called the "Bodhisattva sangha," which meant a community held together by concern for the welfare of all sentient beings.

BPF: You both spent a number of years in a Korean Zen monastery (Songgwang Sa). What does one learn in such a community?

MB: The first thing it teaches is humility. As a Westerner in a Korean setting, you learn the very basic truth that people do things in different ways; it gets you out of the ego-centered view that "this is the right way to do things." Very quickly, one sees that this is, for example, the "French" way or the "English" way, but not *the* way to do things.



Martine and Stephen Batchelor

Koreans go through a similar process when they enter the monastery, especially men, who generally haven't ever — at age 18 — washed their clothes or touched the dishes. They come to the monastery and do these things men don't generally do. So for them too it's a breaking of the conditioning of their little ego-centered selves. As a postulant, the main initial learning is to see that one is part of a greater whole, that one is important in the context of the whole, but not *the* only important being.

One also learns about how others support one's practice. In the meditation hall there is the incredible support of everyone sitting together. Often one may not want to meditate, but if it's time to sit, everybody goes. Or, one may see a person who is more enthusiastic than the others; it helps to see that some people really have strong faith. If one is flagging, this can be refreshing.

SB: Living in an Asian community as a Westerner really challenges one's presumptions about individuality, about living one's life with the goal of controlling the immediate environment. In such a community, one learns to be more flexible, recognizing that everyone has an equal right. While we may aspire to such an ideal theoretically in our spiritual practice, living in community actually *forces* one to enact one's ideals. That can sometimes be very painful — we discover the extent to which we are egocentric, in a very different way than just meditating on non-self. The monastic community provides a very *practical* context for the realization of non-self, for understanding the relativity of one's position in society. I think the monastic rules and the framework of the monastery are set up to challenge egocentricity.

MB: Yes, but often the rules one has to keep are actually cultural rules, not Buddhist ones. For me the great example of cultural influence is behavior concerning socks. In Korea, one has to wear socks all the time, while in Japan one should not wear socks; in Taiwan sometimes one wears them and sometimes it's OK not to. People sometimes think this is Buddhism, but it isn't; it's just cultural context.

SB: Another example of cultural differences: In Korea (and in Asia generally), reason is not the authority it would be in a contemporary Western situation. In the West generally, if a problem arises or if one disagrees with someone in a position of authority, the first recourse is to reason with the person, saying "I respect your point of view, but if you do this, then that will happen." One expects that reason will at least bring about a compromise. In an Asian Confucian society, what counts is one's position within the hierarchy, or one's age; there is a stratified order, clearly defined, that gives one person more authority than another person. So if a superior says to do something that in your reasoned estimation is ridiculous, you nevertheless simply have to do it. At least, you have to *say* you'll do it and then sort out some alternative behind the scenes. A Westerner's initial reaction is usually to start arguing immediately. But that is seen almost as an affront.

BPF: Were there conflicts within the community, and if so, how were they resolved?

MB: Once there was a big conflict between two monks in the meditation hall; they hit each other, and bang, bang, one had a black eye. The other disappeared up the mountain. There was a lot of "hush-hush" about it, and everybody was speaking about it. The monks involved were very, very respected. So one day they gathered everybody in the temple and the two monks apologized in front of everybody. They bowed and said, "We're sorry; we made a mistake." After that it was forgotten. Generally that's the way conflicts are resolved. For instance, at the end of a three-month retreat, there is a time for repentance. We all gather in this room and we all say that we are sorry, that we have made mistakes.

When conflicts involved Westerners, they often had to

be told how the system worked. Once, there was a German monk who, in terms of hierarchy, was inferior to an elder Korean monk. The German monk started to shout at the Korean monk. So everybody got together and explained to this German monk that one was not supposed to do these kinds of things; someone in an inferior position is not supposed to shout. It's not proper.

SB: The reason for his shouting would have made sense to a Westerner. During a meditation period, the elder monk was sitting outside the hall, having a loud conversation, making a lot of noise. This German monk thought this was completely inappropriate behavior, so he flared up.

BPF: Let's talk about your experiences as part of a growing community (Sharpham) in Devon, England. Do you define it as a Buddhist community?

MB: We call it "Buddhist-based." We have one resident who is "Quaker-Buddhist," another who is a "Krishnamurti-Christian" kind of Buddhist. But generally people come from one of the Buddhist traditions: Tibetan, Theravada, Zen, and so on.

SB: The idea of the Sharpham community — which was founded about 8 years ago — came from Maurice Ashe, who owned a large estate, about 800 acres, in Devon. He wanted his estate to be a model for a sustainable community life. He didn't want to turn the estate over to monoculture farming, which would be economically viable in modern terms; he thought that by creating a sustainable community here, we might be able to survive through a period of the breakdown of communities elsewhere. Sharpham is a farming community with a spiritual dimension. So there is a connectedness to the land which hopefully will ground the spirituality of the community, as well as a recognition of the value of meditation and inquiry in elevating *awareness* of one's relationship to the land.

The Sharpham community is made up of people who are already established in some form of Buddhist practice, and who wish to live a life that is in accordance with the values of Buddhist practice and tradition, but who do not wish to become too strongly identified with a particular sect. So we are nonsectarian Buddhists. That's one of our great strengths — the recognition that community can work without an enforced common ideology. And I think that's one of the particular strengths of what can evolve in the West: we don't need to be bound by ideologies. We can have a diversity of traditions, a pluralism of practices, a pluralism of philosophies, that can function very well as an identifiable community of shared concern.

MB: We have in common the Four Noble Truths, the Three Jewels, and the Five Precepts; that's what holds us together. When people come, they really pledge themselves to share these values.

SB: But we don't present ourselves as a place where people can come to train. To join the community implies that one has *already* had training in a particular tradition. It's really a community for those who have been through, as it were, Buddhist graduate school, and are now coexisting with people who have graduated from different traditions.

MB: The community has two main purposes. First is spiritual development — through meditation, living together, and working in the garden, so that we won't lose contact with nature, with the soil. We work three hours a week in the garden throughout the year. We meditate once or twice a day together, and twice a year we do a week retreat in silence. We eat together; we have a rotation for cooking and helping each other, and we have breakfast and dinner together.

In Buddhist circles, there is a tacit assumption that one is a liberal, ecologically minded sort of person. But that kind of ideological assumption is just as dangerous as any other.

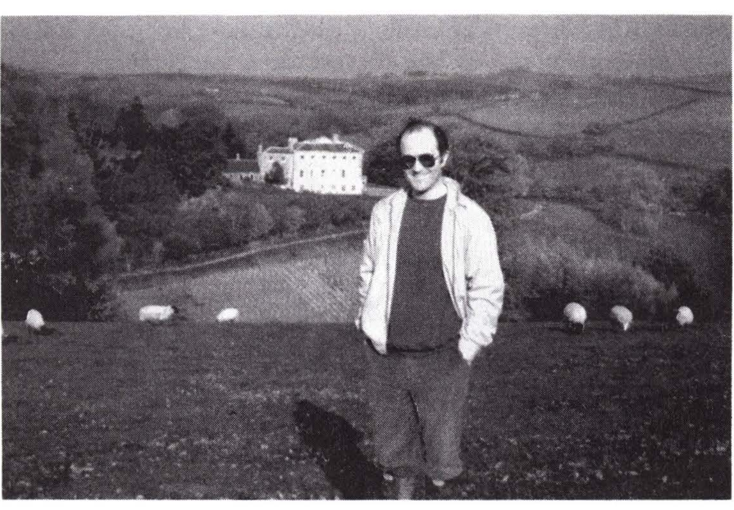
The second purpose of the community is to give service, and to provide education in "spiritual matters" (understood in a very broad sense). We offer a Tuesday evening talk during ten months of the year; after 40 minutes' meditation we have a speaker, sometimes one of us but often someone invited from outside. Of those speakers, 60 percent are Buddhist; the rest include Christians, Muslims, representatives of alternative therapies, speakers on ecology, sometimes musicians. Twice a month, we have workshops, about 70 percent Buddhist; the rest have to do with therapies, massage, and so on. And we have guest rooms where people can come and stay for three days to see how it feels to live in community. In addition, we become a kind of support structure for some people in the wider local community, as well as sometimes for foreigners, helping with spiritual problems and everyday life concerns. People know we are there for them; we are available to talk, to be friends.

Many of us do volunteer work, responding to needs in the local community. Stephen is a Buddhist chaplain in local prisons. I visit old people in the nursing homes. One of us is a member of Amnesty International.

BPF: How has being in community enriched your spiritual practice?

MB: For myself, there are two important ways. First, we live together according to consensus. Nobody is on top and nobody is at the bottom, so everybody has to agree, which means that we must respect and accept each other. This is a great lesson. If you have practiced Buddhism for ten or fifteen years and think that you are a meditative person, community is a great testing ground. Are you up to the challenge or not? You have to accept failing again and again, but never giving up.

Secondly, I love working in the garden; it's a great opportunity to be with nature, to have that connection.
SB: It's a constant challenge. One is not allowed to isolate oneself in one's practice; one's practice is constantly being challenged. When you sit down for breakfast every morning you are facing eight or nine other people to whom you have no allegiance through marriage or family, but simply through spiritual affinity. Living in a community is not a passive thing, something one has to cope with. It is a practice in itself. Living in a community is *work*. It's work to sustain relationships in a meaningful way, not only with other individuals, but also in terms of one's identity as part of the group. You learn not to just be in "my" little world, but also in "our" reality that we are creating together. There are, of course, conflicts and tensions and all the other things that characterize human life. But there's a tremendous sense of achievement and satisfaction in being able to continue living through the weeks and months and years within this evolving community, defining one's practice not just in terms of how it helps "me," but in terms of how it actually helps create an interconnectedness of beings.



Stephen Batchelor, Sharpham House in the background

MB: When people want to join us, we look at whether there is a sense of responsibility, whether they are "solid," and whether they are too narrow-minded. One time we had a couple of people come who were very nice, but we refused them because they seemed to be so narrow-minded in their views of what was good to do, like not putting butter on one's toast. We thought, "Well, if they are upset about butter on the toast . . ."

People must be open, yet not too open so that they become irresponsible. And potential members must be generally committed to practice, to meditation. They must also be prepared to work in the garden.
BPF: What conditioning do you think people bring, especially if they haven't lived in community before?
MB: Most people need a lot of space, if they ever had their own house before. Someone who has come from traveling about, having little personal space, usually fits in more easily than someone who is used to living on his or her own in a house or apartment. In the community one's own space is only one's own room; everywhere else is common space. Some people have had to work through that.
SB: Not only having space, but also having *control* over the space. This is a big issue. And people have to learn not to be so attached to their standards, which they have built so much into their consciousness that they take these standards as almost external norms — "cleanliness is always right, and that's how it has to be."
MB: There is a general concern for ecological issues — like switching off lights, newspaper recycling. We always try to keep the same number of men and women, and we try to make sure we don't have stereotyped roles. And we all vote the Green Party and so on.
SB: Do "we"? One person votes Conservative.
MB: He's new [laughter].
SB: When you live in close proximity with people over a period of time, political and social issues are interwoven into the fabric of your relationships. In community, you don't have to sit down so deliberately to discuss things, as you do when you just meet in, say, a weekly meditation or study group. These issues are organic parts of your life together.

But I do think there is in Buddhist circles a tacit assumption that one is a liberal, ecologically minded, Green-biased sort of person. I think that kind of ideological assumption is just as dangerous as any other kind. The point is to create a forum for *questioning* assumptions, not just taking an idea on because it is somehow expected.
MB: I agree that peer pressure is a danger. But it is more dangerous if you have one authority over the group, a guru or cult situation. If you are already relinquishing your power to a higher authority, it's even easier to coerce each other. Our community is consensus-based and everybody has the same say. So everybody speaks as an autonomous person and is listened to; there is less pressure to conform.

Then there's also the danger of the group becoming insular — developing an "us-versus-them" mentality. Our community has sometimes become too closed, and visitors would tell us it felt uninviting and cold. So we tried to address the problem. I think you have to strike a very fine balance — to be close-knit enough that you have a feeling of community, but not so close that other people can't come in and feel welcome.

Another problem that arises again and again is the problem of power. Although we are all friends and are consensus-based, there is a natural tendency to place

oneself in a way that one has more implicit power. Maybe it's so natural that it cannot be eradicated, but by talking about it, we bring it into the open, and make it easier to work with and less worrisome.

SB: Power-play or "politicking" is inevitable within any human group, almost a kind of a herd or animalistic instinct to establish oneself in a position of relative power. I was listening to a program on the radio recently about how monkeys organize themselves in very clear power relationships. That is something you just cannot pretend doesn't exist. For example, though we have meetings where the group discusses an issue, there's also what could be called the "corridor work" which goes on behind the scenes — where people get together and talk about the issue just between themselves. They'll form alliances, and then there's a kind of building up of sides. We form closer friendships with some people than with others, which can be interpreted as power alliances. We have had situations where the community becomes divided, with one set of alliances set up against another. At these times, we always remind ourselves: What are we really here for? What are the values we are trying to live by? We usually find that the bond between us is more important than a particular conflict that has arisen.

But I also think the community must hold to its primary values and accept that it cannot accommodate all concerns or interests. Some concerns are not going to be in accordance with the primary values, and at that point, a person has to choose whether to stay in the community or leave. A community shouldn't be seen as a kind of 60's commune where we all somehow just love each other and it all works out. Common values must be clearly defined. I cannot see community working in the long term without it having a common spiritual focus.

BPF: How would you describe the common focus and shared values in your community?

MB: The Five Buddhist Precepts or the Tiep Hien precepts, refuge in the Three Jewels, and practicing meditation and being aware. That's what always lifts up the debate, whatever conflict arises. It seems that every time we reach an impasse, at least one of us will reach out to these higher values.

For example, we sometimes complain about guests — "So many guests and it's so tiring!" Then one of us says, "But what about the idea of compassion? It's not just for ourselves that we're doing this, but we also want to be of service." That totally switches the debate. "Oh yes, these people, they enjoy coming here; they actually *help* us, coming here." The precepts help us look at the positive side of things. With power-play issues, we always try to come back to the idea of emptiness and impermanence.

SB: But just having insight into impermanence and emptiness doesn't resolve the problem. Power issues are the unspoken part of any dialogue or discussion, so we start by simply acknowledging these hidden motives, making them conscious, if you like. If you understand Buddhist practice as a process of becoming conscious of the hidden forces that drive your behavior, then self-awareness is very much a part of the process. It's selflessness, in the sense of exposing your hidden motives, your hidden agenda, which is often quite painful to do. One also can observe one's language, when one starts thinking

Power-play is inevitable in any human group, a kind of herd instinct to establish oneself in a position of relative power. You can't just pretend it doesn't exist.

in terms of "them": "Oh, look what *they're* doing now. Isn't it typical that *they* would want to do that?" When language starts to reflect "us" and "them," that is a warning signal that some kind of fracture is beginning.

Buddhist practice is about constantly questioning how much your action is self-serving and basically concerned with achieving a certain set of acceptable feelings within your own ego-defined boundaries. It's difficult to practice, but that questioning is really what spiritual community is there to support.

BPF: What is your vision of what community might be in the West?

MB: I think it's important not to impose one's own view of how community should be, because there are so many ways of having community, especially in an urban setting. It's important that a community develop organically. Instead of having these big visions, each of us could start, say, by smiling to each other, second by inviting each other, then by practicing together, and then by trying to live and work together. It is important to do one step at a time, for people to consider their own lives, and look at what they can do to improve the sense of community, especially in the city.

SB: I think it is important to de-monasticize the concept of sangha. The monastic concept of sangha is a legacy that is not appropriate to our present situation. We need to conceive of sangha as a pluralism of communities, which includes monastic communities as well as lay communities, both tightly as well as loosely defined.

We also need to spend time actually *practicing* community living — learning to live with people in the context of a shared spiritual concern. That form of life is one that is a challenge to many people in our society: not the fact that it's Buddhist, but the fact that we are reintroducing the value of communal living, as opposed to a nuclear family. This is something that has to be *done*, not just dreamed about. ❖

Donald Rothberg is a teacher and writer on the faculty of Saybrook Institute in San Francisco. He is a BPF Board member, and is helping to organize the 1992 BPF Summer Institute on "Practicing Community."

Samadhi . . .

The Wounded Sangha

by Paul Shippee

Most of the meditators I know say there is something personal missing from their life in the sangha. What is it?

People generally believe that meditation, by itself, is an effective way to get in touch with one's deep (and sometimes walled-off) feelings. I have found that it's not so. Meditation, by itself, is not effective in developing warmth and affection in a group, nor is it effective in teaching people to communicate deeply about feelings and the living process of emotions. There is simply not a receptivity to this among the meditators I know.

In Buddhist communities, we don't talk much about our deep feelings, even though this is an important area of healthy community life. In my sangha, I see very little sharing of emotions, little warmth and openness.

An expectation I have about my sangha is that it be a community. *Sangha*, a Sanskrit term, means the community of people who practice the path of meditation and understanding the Dharma. Community implies people you can commune with. It is my experience that we have failed as a community in spite of the rich Dharma teachings we have received.

When Buddhists see an emotion like anger, they dismiss it as bad, as "ego," and thus distance themselves from it.

The realization of this failure has been painful to me and I have tried to understand it better. What is this personal thing that is missing from American Buddhist sangha life? One way I have tried to understand it is to move away from the sangha — emotionally, psychologically, and physically. I became involved, off and on, with men's groups, emotional process groups, dream groups, environmental groups . . . and with people recovering from addictions, trauma, and abuse. I wanted to find places where community was alive. The level of emotional honesty I found in these other groups surprised and delighted me with its completeness born, in part, of desperation. The warmth I experienced there convinced me that community — however fragmented in today's world — is possible. What keeps Buddhist groups from having it?

One thing I discovered outside my sangha is the concept of woundedness. It is not particularly a Buddhist idea, but it probably should be in North America. Woundedness, in myself and others, has helped me understand a lot of things about myself and my behavior. It also helped me deeply understand a Buddhist idea — *ahimsa*, not causing harm to others. I am a wounded man, and there are parts of me that I could not see that were causing harm to myself and others. I learned that you can't really kill the wound or the demon within, but you can educate it.

Any disconnection from our wounds may confound our understanding of egolessness — the Buddha's teaching of "no self." If we interpret no self as an invitation to detach from deep feeling, it's the wrong kind of detachment. We are all wounded, and it is necessary to understand the Dharma in a personal way — personalize the teachings in our own life journey. A misunderstanding of egolessness can also play cleverly into wounded self esteem. But low self esteem should not be confused with no self. Overcoming our disconnection with ourselves is a mighty part of waking up.

When Buddhists in my sangha see a deep, confused emotion like anger, they tend to dismiss it as unwanted, bad "ego" and thus distance themselves from it. With the help of the concept of woundedness, I learned to feel — and own — the deep grief I carried and to understand the source of anger in myself. I was able to connect with emotions as *part* of me, instead of something unwanted that I could get rid of. The warmth and support that enabled me to discover and pass through these walls of ignorance were not available to me in my sangha. The other groups I attended openly practiced bravery and fearlessness instead of just talking about it, or "appreciating" it as an abstraction.

In my sangha, there is the overriding idea that Buddhism is a *project*; thus, we are task-oriented rather than people-oriented. The task is planting Buddhadharma in North America. Compared to this noble scheme, it is easy to dismiss people and emotions as irritating, "on a trip," in the way, or what have you. One day I walked into our large community building and watched an administrator in our sangha, a nun in maroon robes, rushing around the halls with papers in her hands. I saw people standing around who wanted to speak with her. They looked perplexed; she appeared to be avoiding them. Later, in the intimacy of our friendship, I told her that I thought her job was to put the papers down and deal directly with whoever came in the door, person to person.

Another day I ran into a second sangha adminstrator

continued on page 24

. . . or Shutdown?

American Sanghas: Too White?

by Cate Gable

On one of the last days in Toni Packer's recent seven-day silent meditation retreat in California, I opened my eyes in the sitting room several moments before the bell sounded. Everyone sat with eyes closed, quietly, rocking a little or swaying. There were thirty-seven of us who had been there the entire week, sitting in the same places, in the same positions. I scanned the lot of us: by now most faces and postures were quite familiar to me. I knew who used cushions and how many, who sat on wood stools, who faced the wall, who wrapped up in shawls.

But looking this time, I saw what I hadn't seen before — we were all white. With the exception of one man who was, perhaps, Middle Eastern — and I only guessed this based on knowing his first name — we all looked middle-class and very white.

The economic reality of this community had occurred to me earlier as I watched the retreat meditators arrive in various kinds of vehicles: several Volvos, a Mercedes, BMW, Honda with a sun-roof. Maybe two junkers in the whole lot. And even when we got out of our cars, we had an — albeit home-grown — well-heeled look about us. Not that we were fashion plates, but there was a "meditation uniform" that bespoke expendable resources: we wore natural fabrics (cotton, silk, wool), loose-fitting pants (Gap sweats/Chi Pants with Guatemalan fabric trim), heavy wool socks (REI, North Face, Whole Earth Access), layers of shirts/turtlenecks, and, of course, Birkenstocks.

Meditation, particularly Toni's variety, encourages quiet inquiry, so one of the items I came away looking at was us. Who are we, this community of meditators?

Is the meditation movement in America a white middle-class phenomenon? Is meditating a "marker" — as Barbara Ehrenreich would call it — like a Volvo or Doc Martens, another "possession" that identifies us to others of our ilk? Is it the thing to do — the phrenology of our age? Do we take it up because we admire the friends of ours who do it?

Or, leaving that more cynical perspective, is it simply a spiritual path that does speak to us truly, that provides us Western consumers nourishment to counter the famine within?

But even if we seek in meditation a "presence of the sacred," isn't it still a matter of having the resources — economic and emotional — to be able to take advantage of it? Could a single black woman with three children consider a seven-day silent meditation retreat? Would she even want to be "awake"?

One friend suggests that meditation as a spiritual path for the white middle-class is not so much a matter of economics but of proclivity. A black person in emotional pain might seek out the help of a church elder as opposed to finding out about meditation. So is the whiteness of our meditation community simply the result of natural ethnic tendencies? (This seems a dangerous assumption to make.) Is it simply circumstantial that white meditators spread the word about meditation only in their circles of mono-ethnic friends?

Maybe our predominantly white meditation community isn't something we need to worry about. I'll bet the members of the Baptist Church on the corner in my predominantly black neighborhood aren't too concerned about not having enough white folks in their pews.

I don't have even one black friend who I could recommend meditation to. Why don't I know that black woman with three children? Or the Iranian who runs the corner grocery?

I suppose this line of questioning is just part of our regional bias. My realization that we were all white meditators sitting together in a room occurred to me only after having the consciousness-raising experience of living in the Bay Area for the last ten years. These questions would never be asked in Yakima, Washington, where I grew up, where all my friends were white and middle-class, not because there weren't any people of color in Yakima, but because they lived elsewhere — on the reservation. In fact, the question of whether the meditation community should be a politically correct mixture of people would not be raised in Yakima because there aren't any meditators there!

The other day I was talking with a fellow meditator about how to select a place for next year's Toni Packer Retreat. A group of Toni's meditators in California have spent a considerable amount of time searching out just the perfect spot: it must be affordable, have a large enough meditation hall, cozy rooms, be in beautiful surroundings with trails for hiking, have a well-appointed kitchen, not too far from the metropolitan area, and, oh yes, provide wheelchair accessibility.

continued on page 24

Too White? (continued from page 23)

No one in the Bay Area would dispute the need for accessibility to a meditation hall or a retreat for differently abled folks, for people of color, for any person with some quality of otherness. (And "otherness" is not a static quality; in Hawaii, I'm in the minority and called a *haole*, which translates literally as "foreigner" and usually means "white person.") Yet we don't always understand that the choices we make create our community and that those choices *precede* the formation of the community.

Just as it would be unthinkable to go into the desert and say, "When the birds and mammals start arriving, then we'll bring in some water and plant trees," it is equally simple-minded to take the approach that when we get some meditators in wheelchairs, then we'll build a wheelchair ramp. Or when we get a few more meditators of color, then we'll start doing outreach into other ethnic communities.

Unfortunately, sometimes the choices we make aren't conscious; only the consequences of those choices are visible. I have unconsciously chosen friends who are more or less like me — folks who like to talk about ideas, who read the *New Yorker* and *Harper's* and who drive decent automobiles. If my friends are different from me, most likely the differences are those I aspire to — maybe I should become a vegetarian.

But my friends aren't different enough. Unfortunately, I don't have even one black friend that I could recommend meditation to. Why don't I know that black woman with three children? Or the Iranian who runs the corner grocery and lives up the block?

If we decide what kind of community we want, then we have a better chance of making that goal visible, although it may entail choices that seem at first uncomfortable or inconvenient. Or maybe having a "goal" is not in keeping with the mode of meditation.

Perhaps the real question is, what kind of meditation community do we want? Who do *we* want to be? Or maybe, more to the point, do I want to join another group of white folks? ❖

Cate Gable is a poet and musician, Director of Public Information at Ohlone College, and the publicist for comic Lea DeLaria.

Wounded (continued from page 22)

at the airport. I met his cold blue eyes, and he gave me a faint nod as we passed in the throng. He never broke his stride. I was crushed. I guess I expected some warmth from a fellow sangha member in the impersonal rush of the airport. I noticed that I blamed myself later for the quality of this encounter. After all, I secretly told myself, I am an enthusiastic, aggressive type who doesn't exactly fit in. I deserve only a cool nod. These were some of the low thoughts that went along with the hurt I felt. In the context of our sangha, we had no language, no way to process deep emotion or shame. The personal was a dark, unwieldy secret. Deep emotion, especially "negative" emotion, somehow didn't fit into our "spirituality."

Long hours of meditation and close association with an enlightened teacher can create a dangerous aura of expectation. The vertical part of sangha is the aspiration to connect with our true nature. The fruition of this aspect is usually embodied in the teacher, the guru. But the horizontal aspect of sangha is community, the imperfect human bond. In my experience, the vertical part has too often become a sloppy glue that eclipses the horizontal part. This was one of my first experiences in Trungpa Rinpoche's sangha. In the early days, I sat and waited with many others to see the teacher who was interviewing students one-on-one in another room. I clearly remember the anguish I felt in the smoky room as most of the students fidgeted, smoked cigarettes, and stared more or less at the wall straight ahead, or at the floor. Why were we ignoring each other? It felt more like a dentist's office than a community gathering place.

I learned that you can't really kill the wound or the demon within, but you can *educate it.*

Perhaps the basis of this disconnection is not too difficult to understand. The mode of using spiritual concepts to cleverly isolate one's suffering from awareness has become, since that first inkling I had in the waiting room, rather obvious in my sangha. It's an easy enough thing to do and perhaps that's why Buddha made the First Noble Truth an acknowledgment of the fact of suffering. Bypassing legitimate suffering is a symptom of a Buddhism that takes place only in the head. It is franchised neurosis. In Buddhist communities, we feel embarrassed about our personal suffering and avoid talking about it. The same goes for our joy. In the Zen monastery at Tassajara where I lived for two years, a student was dancing with a broom during work period one day. A more senior student rebuked him, saying, "We don't do that sort of thing here."

The purpose of emotional shutdown is to keep out pain. It's a survival behavior we learned in childhood. As adults we need to work to outgrow it; it doesn't happen by itself. Emotional shutdown is just as much a problem on the spiritual path as anywhere else.

While a purely intellectual Buddhism is attractive and can lead to seductive mind adventures, no transformation can take place. No wound is touched. And no compassion is realized. The mistake we make is to use Buddhist spirituality to shield that wound. But the Buddhist path is *through* the wound, not around it. Touching our wound — feeling it thoroughly — is waking up. *Bodhicitta* (awakened mind) is an open wound. ❖

Paul Shippee lives in Boulder, Colorado. He has been involved in Buddhist communities — both Zen and Tibetan — for half his life.

Community on the Tracks —

OWNING THE DISOWNED

A conversation with Maylie Scott
by Denise Caignon

Maylie Scott is a Zen priest and political activist. In this interview, she talks about her experience of community while protesting at the Concord Naval Weapons Station (near the San Francisco Bay Area), a weapons plant and the site of nearly continuous anti-war protests since the Vietnam War.

BPF: Can you give a bit of background on the Weapons Station?

Maylie: It's where many of the arms that get shipped across the Pacific are assembled. I just heard today that the Concord Naval Weapons Station got first prize for armaments shipped to the Persian Gulf; they supplied a third of the weapons used in the Gulf invasion. If you go out to the Base most weekdays, you will see a train and between one and ten trucks a day carrying missiles and rocket fuel. It really is a *disowned* part of our community.

In 1987, Brian Willson and two other people were sitting on the tracks at the Base, blocking a train. Brian was hit by the train and his legs were cut off. A couple days after his accident there was a rally of fifteen thousand people, and there would often be 20 people sleeping there at night, just by the side of the highway. Since that time there has been a continuous peace encampment. It lasted vigorously for two years and has diminished the last two years. Now there is one person out there, Greg Getty, and a few other people come and go. Greg lives in a camper by the side of the road and supports himself by delivering papers in the very early morning.

BPF: How do you and others who have spent quite a bit of time there keep the morale going, considering it is such a small group of people?

MS: From the first time I went out — Christmas of 1987 — it was very clear to me that the community there was not really based on results, although it was dedicated to stopping the weapons from being exported. The site is the basis of a community witness. It has a kind of power because of the violence it contains. When one is there, one understands that. Seeing the trucks pass and knowing what's happened — both on the site and as a result of the weapons themselves — you fall into a meditative response; you recognize something. There is something about being in a place where nothing is disowned that is very restful. There is nothing to be covered up. It's all there and you are right next to it.

I think people who are there recognize very clearly their own vulnerability and the community's vulnerability. Just *being* there is to be vulnerable. For one thing, there is a great deal of anger amongst the people who drive up and down the road, and at any time, anyone standing or sleeping there could be killed by a car swerving off. There have been some near misses. It is really quite extraordinary that nobody has been severely injured. One person was shot with a pellet gun as he slept by the road during the Gulf War. Glass bottles have been thrown. There is a regular kind of violence, but nobody has been killed.

It's amazing that Greg and others have continued there for five years, but I think this feeling of being vulnerable really keeps a community together: that sharing, that being on the edge even when a community is extremely diverse in every way — culturally, economically, and politically — as that one is. And all kinds of people come. Unless someone actually does something violent, nobody is ever asked to leave.

The Base Commander said his heart was with the protesters. Three months later, he was murdered in his home.

For a while after Brian's injury there were between five and fifteen people living there. It was a very mixed community, including a few people who had previously had regular middle-class lives. Another group of 50 or so people came regularly to the site. "Residents" and nonresidents hashed out a kind of consensus way of being together. That worked for a time, but then the tyranny of consensus took over and the people who weren't able or willing to spend hours and hours at meetings just began to drop off. There were also a lot of visitors from all over the world — it was on the map as far as peace encampments went. The boundaries of the site were gradually negotiated between protesters, Base, and County. A privy was set up. A table, a large umbrella, two beds, chairs and an assortment of signs, painted rocks and logs — to function as protection against swerving vehicles — all remain. For a while a resident kept a garden; he dug up some vacant ground across from the site and planted marigolds and amaranth. Later the garden was bulldozed by the Navy.

BPF: What is the relationship between Base personnel and the people in the peace encampment?

MS: There's a certain friendliness that got started with grief over Brian's injury; a very warm feeling mixed in with grief. No one wanted to make the Navy into enemies, and so people made a very conscious attempt to deal very openly and directly. Some of the Base person-

nel were very sympathetic. The Lieutenant Commander, Peter Ferland, came over with flowers several days after Brian was injured. He said his heart was with the protesters. Then three or four months later, he was murdered in his home. Nobody knows by whom. There was a great deal of dialogue amongst the Base personnel about Brian's mauling — some sympathy and some feeling of wanting to retaliate against the protesters. But we all made a big effort to keep communications open: we'd write notes each morning about the planned action of the day and dialogue whenever possible with Base personnel. Then there was a phase when the Navy and the sheriffs began to use pain-holds. When people would sit on the tracks to block the trains and refuse to get up, the Marines or sheriffs or whoever was doing the arrest would twist their arms; two people had their arms broken, and a third was sprained. The people whose arms were broken sued the Navy and won an out-of-court settlement, as well as an injunction in Contra Costa county that said no pain-holds would be allowed on the site.

Maylie Scott and Marilyn Chilcote leading a Buddhist meditation at the Weapons Station

But in general, the relationship between the protesters and the people who were on the Base regularly became more friendly — more and more, until now it's like having tea with your grandmother to be arrested. The present commander, Commander Owens, is very skillful at defusing trouble and dialoguing. Very good listener. He obviously sees it as his job; whenever there's a large protest, he's there in full uniform. He'll enter into any kind of dialogue and be receptive, and whenever possible, he'll bring down the temperature if things get tense.

BPF: When you say that he listens, do you feel he's *really* listening ?

MS: Yes, he's listening and taking in — *and* he's doing his professional job. I doubt that he's being stirred in his own opinions, but in these nonviolent actions you don't know; you really don't know. Seeds get lodged, but you can't really measure the result. There's a kind of cognitive dissonance that gets planted.

Here's an example of what I mean: I belong to Bay Area Religious Peace Activists, a dozen or so people who meet once a week at St. Joseph's in Berkeley. In December we staged a Feast of the Holy Innocents ceremony at the Base. The day commemorates the occasion when King Herod demanded that all the baby Jews be killed. We gathered on the lawn in front of the Base and planted a cross from each country where children had been killed by "our" weapons. We had a service and remembered the children who had been hurt, as well as the children who suffer and die at home because of our society's neglect. Then we took the crosses and a large coffin and trespassed on the Base. We read a very effective liturgy, which contained a quote from Bush at one of his rhetorical heights, about the New World Order; factual reports about the damage that had been inflicted on the children in Iraq; and passages from the Bible about peace — the vision of peace. It was a very moving juxtaposition. After the passage from Isaiah, "and the lion shall lie down with the lamb," I looked up and the sheriff standing above me was almost in tears. So you don't know what happens inside people — but I think things happen.

BPF: It almost sounds like there's a community across the lines.

MS: There is. There is. But they have to watch their jobs. Over the days, contacts occur. The same sheriffs tend to arrest people again and again, so there's time to get to know each other, and people do.

BPF: Do you consider the Base and the people there your community?

MS: Yes, I do. It's a healing place for me. It's very encouraging to stand there in front of the prayer flag, which my friends Diane and Sydney and I put up about two years ago. Diane found a telephone pole that had been cut off on the side of the road. We brought metal ties from an old railway track down the road and used them to balance the pole, and then we hung strings up and put up some prayer flags. During the last BPF Meditation in Action Institute, 20 people came and made new flags. There's also a little laminated picture of the Dalai Lama, smiling. He's always smiling. To stand there, in front of the prayer flags, with the Base in the background, and look at his smiling face, is kind of like a little girl sitting in her mother's lap, and her mother's saying, "It's OK. Everything's going to be OK."

Sydney is a practicing Vajrayana Buddhist, and she first lived in her car there, and later was given an old trailer. She set that trailer up just like a monastery. There were wonderful Tibetan pictures everywhere; it was her practice place. Diane at that point wasn't a Buddhist, but she was ready to meditate, and was, in her own way, "just sitting" there at the Base. She had been a computer programmer making big bucks, when her life started making less and less sense to her. She came to the Base just about the time Brian was injured in 1987. She hit a

40th birthday, went on a two-week backpacking trip, and then just decided to give away everything and come to the Base. She spent a lot of time hanging around the site, becoming quieter, stiller. Because what do you do all day, just hanging out? You just start to calm down. She was grateful for this, and began to see it as a monastic experience.

The three of us decided we'd set up a more formal monastic schedule. We'd sit zazen from about 5 - 9 PM on Saturday nights, then get up at 6 on Sunday and sit till 9, and have two very simple meals. It was a little *sesshin* [meditation retreat]. A few people joined us from time to time, but mostly it was the three of us. Sydney would sleep in her camper, and Diane and I would sleep by the side of the road. So that was a community I felt very involved in. It was my family community.

There is something about a place where nothing is disowned that is very restful. Nothing is covered up. It's all there and you are right next to it.

You know, I get to feeling stifled in my life, in the middle-classishness of it. I go out there and just take a deep breath. It's partly the place, and partly the people who are so dedicated to freeing themselves and our society from our various addictions.

More and more, my life seems to embody the *koan,* "How do we live wholesomely in a society that is so unbalanced, that perpetuates so much evil?" My dream is to, little by little, leave my private lifestyle and belong full-time to a spiritual activist community. It's a little like the difference between doing missionary work and actually living the lifestyle.

BPF: So what would your life be like, if you were to become a full-fledged member of a community of spiritual activists?

MS: You've hit me right in the area where daydream meets reality.

BPF: That's a very interesting area.

MS: I feel uncomfortable with the fact that I am embedded in private property. I live with my 89-year-old mother, so I'm not going to change my lifestyle while she's with me. But a private lifestyle cuts one off. I would be more comfortable in a situation where more was shared. I could easily see living in a place where I was doing a combination of social justice work and AIDS work, and living with people who were doing the same. And there would be a commitment to regular sitting together. And the people would be taking care of their own household difficulties with each other, keeping each other clear and straight. I have tremendous longing for that.

BPF: So do you think it's important for people to live together?

MS: I think it's very important. And that's why my adventures on the tracks have been very deep, but they still have the quality of adventures, because I'm not committed to a group of people, the way I'm committed here at the Berkeley Zen Center. This is home base. What this community went through during the Persian Gulf invasion was very difficult and very important. As the war brewed, the sangha polarized. Some people felt we needed to do something, that this was an emergency in the country, and we had to take some kind of responsibility, some action. Others felt that you should leave it all at the gate; the zendo is to be an undisturbed place where everyone can come for respite from the outside situation. In the last year we really worked through something. I had felt such despair and urgency as the armed slaughter broke out that I lost touch with how I was alienating people. And the sangha showed me the effects of that; it was a painful and honest mirror for me. I learned something. It's not right speech, actually, to bombard people with one's opinions.

I feel very grateful for our sangha work. It softened me; I saw disowned pieces of myself. I think we always have to work together on what we disown as a society, and what we disown personally. They can't be separated.

Now *that* commitment to community does not seem like an adventure. That seems like hard, nitty-gritty, committed, family work. So now there are still people who think we should leave it at the gate, and others who think we should be engaged. I'm sure we'll get in each other's hair from time to time. What's changed is how we deal with ourselves and each other around our differences. ◆

Maylie Scott goes to the Concord Weapons Base one Wednesday morning a month (except May) to block weapons shipments. Anyone who wants to participate by joining or supporting can leave a message at the BPF office (510/525-8596) and Maylie will contact you.

When Evening Comes, Winter

The light, the sun
beginning

its old descent
in the cold

gray and blue sky
with a trail of

red, enters
through the thin

curtains, the room
illuminated.

— by Kevin Bezner

A Community of Spiritual Friends

• The FWBO •

an interview with Manjuvajra
by Denise Caignon

*The Friends of the Western Buddhist Order (FWBO) was founded in 1967 by the English monk Ven. Mahasthavira Sangharashita. The FWBO consists of Buddhist centers, intentional communities, and team-based right livelihood businesses in Europe, the United States, Australia, New Zealand, and India. The FWBO also carries on the work of Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkhar in India — a movement to convert former Hindu "untouchables" to Buddhism [*see story on next page*]. Though not connected to a specific lineage or school of Buddhism, FWBO meditation practices (mindfulness of breathing, visualization, and the development of metta — lovingkindness) are drawn mostly from Indo-Tibetan traditions.*

Manjuvajra, born in England, was ordained into the FWBO in 1973. Since then, he has lived and worked at various FWBO communities in Europe and the U.S., serving as an administrator and meditation/dharma teacher. He currently lives and works at the Aryaloka Buddhist Center in New Hampshire, which he established in 1985 with three other FWBO members.

Manjuvajra (second from left), along with other members of the Aryaloka community and staff

BPF: How does a community establish itself as part of the FWBO network?

Manjuvajra: It just takes three or more people who decide they're going to live together to deepen their Buddhist practice. They don't affiliate with the FWBO in any formal way; there's no membership fee. But informally, we put a lot of emphasis on developing strong friendships. In fact, the glue that holds the whole thing together is personal friendship.

BPF: And how do you facilitate these friendships?

M: We go on joint meditation retreats, and all the communities spend quite a bit of time together. Also, there's a lot of moving around; people will move from one community to another, sometimes in another part of the world.

There are different levels of involvement with the FWBO. The actual Order members, of which there are about 400, are people who are firmly committed to practicing Buddhism within the context of the FWBO. Those people keep in contact via their local chapters, through a newsletter, and through international conventions. At the conventions, people give talks on the particular projects they're involved in.

BPF: What's a typical day like in an FWBO community?

M: At about 6:30 AM there's a meditation; it's a crucial element of the community. People eat meals together and share the housekeeping. If the community is associated with a dharma center, people work in the center. The more established communities are pretty self-sufficient. For example, there's a very successful gift wholesaling business in Cambridge, England that supports three men's communities and one women's community. Around the London Buddhist center, there are a couple dozen satellite communities.

Within the FWBO we put equal emphasis on meditation, study, and devotional practices. Within that, there may be some people who put more emphasis on meditation. For example, in North Wales there's a men's meditation retreat center, where they just do that.

BPF: So individual communities aren't constrained by any top-down control?

M: That's noticeably absent from the FWBO. Though I should say, anyone who comes to our centers is taught mindfulness of breathing and the *metta bhasana* — which is the development of lovingkindness, in five stages.

BPF: It sounds very fluid.

M: It is. It's very difficult to describe how the structure works. I don't want to give the impression that it's incredibly loose. There is a substantial organization there, in fact. But it's not centralized in any way. Along with the decentralization goes a lot of personal responsibility. People are very serious about the areas they actually do take on.

BPF: Why do you think it works?

M: I think it works because it's based on friendship, and that is always stressed as very fundamental. You know,

continued on page 30

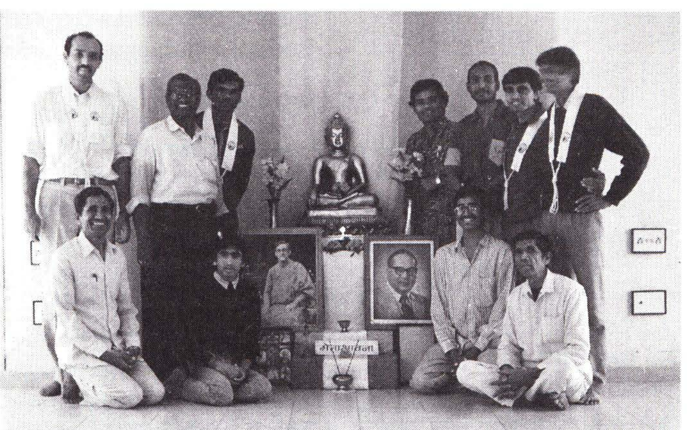
The FWBO in India —

Buddhism Touches the "Untouchable"

Few people in the West have heard of Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkhar, which is unfortunate; the movement he spawned in the 1950s is one of the most active and radical Buddhist social movements in the world.

Ambedkhar was born in 1891 in India of Hindu "untouchable" parents. A lawyer, he became an architect of free India's constitution and the first Minister of Law in 1947. He converted to Buddhism in 1956, and over the next few weeks, a few million of his untouchable followers converted also. Ambedkhar died only six weeks after his conversion.

So here was this enormous movement of new Buddhists who really didn't know what they'd done, or what Buddhism was about. They just knew that this man, who was their leader, thought it was the best thing to do. Over the next decade, the movement spread and became very politicized, so when Lokamitra (an English FWBO member) went there in 1978, he found people were still craving the dharma. They wanted to know why Ambedkhar thought conversion to Buddhism was so important for them, as untouchables. Today there are about six million ex-untouchable Buddhists in India.



Residents at Bahujan Hitay hostel in Ahmedabad, India

Buddhism has had an enormous impact on the lives of former untouchables. Untouchables actually *believe* in untouchability; they believe themselves to be inferior beings. But Buddhism teaches that every being has the potential for enlightenment, which is a radical, revolutionary change of viewpoint. So when people hear that — well, you hear reports of people bursting into tears; they feel they've been liberated from the hell of caste. All of a sudden, this incredible vista opens up for them.

I was showing some pictures of the work we're doing in India to a group of Theravadin monks, and there was a slide of a whole room of women meditating. They were just stunned. They couldn't believe untouchables would ever meditate, especially women. They don't believe their *own* people would meditate. A quarter of the entire FWBO Order is made up of Indian ex-untouchables, and there are tens of thousands of others who are practicing meditation.

The Ambedkharite movement (of which the FWBO is a part) has many currents. In India, the FWBO has two programs: the *Trailokya Bauddha Maha Sangha Sahayak* (the TBMSG), which emphasizes meditation, and the *Bahujan Hitay* ("for the welfare of the many"), which spawns right-livelihood projects.

Many ex-untouchables must still perform the worst jobs in Indian society, but we're trying to introduce different jobs for them. The *Bahujan Hitay* runs health clinics for mothers and children, preschools, and adult literacy projects. They also run hostels that are near the schools, where kids can come and live. They've become so successful that they're now used as a model by the Indian government. In fact, the government is beginning to give us financial support. We've also set up programs where women can earn some income, and not be so dependent on their husbands — simple things, like sewing classes. Then they help a woman get a loan so she can buy a sewing machine and start making clothes for her family and as a business.

Residential FWBO communities have developed rapidly in India in the past few years. There are now nine, eight for men and one for women, mostly located at the hostels where the school-age kids are living. Community members work with the children, and like their Western counterparts, meditate and study together.

Western countries are rightfully criticized for their "aid" work to Third World countries. All FWBO programs in India are devised and run by Indian Order members, who are ex-untouchable followers of Dr. Ambedkhar. The money comes from the West, mostly from the work of Karuna Trust [*see accompanying interview*] but the implementation is left entirely to Indian members. All we're doing is facilitating financially. And the affiliation and support the Indian Buddhists feel with Western Buddhists is very strong. That Westerners actually share the religion of Indian untouchables, by choice, is an incredible boost in morale. I don't think that can be underestimated. And I think Western Order members benefit immeasurably from the optimism of the Indian members. ❖

—from an interview with Manjuvajra

continued from page 28

you're interested in what your friends are up to. You talk to your friends about what they're doing, you give them your feedback.

BPF: How many communities are there at this point?

M: There are about 40 in England — a dozen of those are well established, with a lot of people living there. In the States, we have about three. We have one at Aryaloka for men, and two women's communities.

BPF: So they tend to be single-sex communities?

M: The majority of the ones that survive are. In the early days, there were a lot of mixed communities, a lot of sexual relationships, and it got very confusing and intense. So, as an experiment, people tried single-sex communities, and it turned out they were the ones that really survived. They give people the best environment for spiritual practice.

It's the single-sex communities that have really survived. They provide an incredible sense of freedom, and the best environment for spiritual practice.

BPF: Because they remove the distraction of sexual relationships?

M: I think it's a lot deeper than that. It breaks down the gender roles that come into play quite automatically. When you live together with people of the same sex, it creates a special atmosphere which is quite satisfying, and has a high degree of freedom. And also, you find out more about yourself when you're not around people of the opposite sex. And I think men and women just do things differently. For example — and speaking very broadly — women tend to be very much interested in relationship with each other, so in the women's communities, it's very important that the individual members get along. There's a lot of checking with each other, keeping the contacts strong. In a men's community, the tendency is more to be involved in some kind of goal or project. Men are not so worried about how they get on with each other. In some communities, the men tend to spend their time in their rooms, whereas the women all sit in the kitchen and talk to each other.

When a woman comes into a men's community, the change is just incredible. The natural tendency is for all the attention to go straight to her, and competition starts to develop. The men try to establish their mutual positions with each other, and a certain concentration is lost; there's a level of communication that gets destroyed. It's almost a chemical reaction, it's not something you can control in your head.

BPF: How do you deal with people having romantic relationships?

M: The men's communities tend to be closed; you can't have a girlfriend stay overnight, while the women's communities are often more open. If both people happen to live in communities, the man will usually visit at the woman's community. If both are closed, they'll just meet and go away for a weekend or something. People in the FWBO tend to have a very broad range of human relationships, so there's less emphasis placed on the sexual relationship. One of my friends, for instance, sees his girlfriend about once every four months. Somebody else I know sees her boyfriend about once a year, because he lives on the other side of the world. People maintain sexual relationships, but they're much less central. Less intense. And yet you can still develop just as much intimacy. I value every second of the time I spend with my girlfriend. I never take her for granted.

BPF: What if people have kids?

M: There are a wide range of opinions on this, but once people become Order members, once they've actually committed themselves, most of them choose not to have kids. They've decided to put their energy into their practice, and the establishment of the dharma in the West. Kids take an awful lot of energy. There are no mixed FWBO communities with children. They've been tried, but they've never succeeded. There are a few couples who have had children, and the child stayed with the mother while an infant, in a women's community. In one case, one of the boys, as he got older, started spending more time with his dad, at a men's community.

BPF: Do the same rules apply to gay relationships?

M: We found that if two gay people are living together in a community, it can create the same problems as a heterosexual relationship. The rule is usually no sex on the premises, gay or straight. There are probably a higher proportion of gay people in the FWBO than there would be in a sample from the rest of society. Gay people tend to be more experimental, a lot more open. They're looking for a way of life in which they can express their sexuality and feel it all works properly. Regular Western life doesn't offer that opportunity.

BPF: It's interesting to hear you talk about such rules, which many of us would regard as punitive — especially "hip" young Westerners. Yet you're talking about *choosing* them, and how workable it is.

M: It provides such an incredible sense of freedom. It's not denouncing sexual relationships. It's saying that there are forces at work in sexual relationships which — if you let them get out of hand — will really undermine your spiritual practice. So we try to work out different ways to control them. I should also add that we are trying to develop something new: strictly monastic, celibate communities. We've got some land in Spain, and there's talk about starting a large men's community there, where people would take a vow of celibacy. We want to have the whole range of possibilities, and recognize them as equally valid ways to express one's spiritual commitment.

BPF: Can you give examples of some right-livelihood

businesses, and how you got them started?
M: They started because people decided they wanted to work together with other Buddhists; they were fed up with the atmosphere of the jobs they had. People were pretty inexperienced at first, so the businesses were unsophisticated, but they reflected our ideals — like wholefood shops and vegetarian restaurants. The FWBO has a publications wing, which started in one community where our newsletter was published. They started publishing a few pamphlets and books, and gradually they bought a press and started taking on outside work. Eventually it became a much more professional publishing business. We now publish about 25 books on Buddhist topics.

To fund FWBO activities in India [*see story on page 29*], a group of members in Oxford, England set up Karuna Trust. They raise money by going door-to-door. The fundraising teams — of about 6 to 10 people — move from city to city. They set up a temporary community in each city, where they live together, meditate, and have study groups. Karuna Trust involves a lot of people, doing a sort of tour of duty. They raise about a million dollars a year.

BPF: If someone wants to set up a business, is there some effort to follow Buddhist principles?
M: There's a lot of discussion about business ethics. For instance, the gift business in England was initially based on importing fairly tacky gifts from Asia — a lot of plastic stuff. It was quite successful, and people's livelihoods were starting to depend on it. Then they said, hey, hang on, is this what we really want to be doing? Do we want to be increasing the plastics in the world? And they decided they didn't. They decided to go Green about five or six years ago. But they were a business, so they had to make the change gradually. Now, they've opened a chain of stores called Evolution, which sell Green products — everything is made of good quality, recyclable materials. A lot of it is still imported from Asia.
BPF: And how do they compensate the people in Asia? A typical import/export business would just want to maximize profits.
M: We work with businesses who treat people well. In India, for instance, we've got our FWBO movement, so we try to set those people up to make the products to sell in the West.

continued on page 44

Women in the FWBO —

The Realm of Tara

by Dharmacharini Kalyanavaca

In a quiet corner of the Welsh/English border country, a unique women's project is unfolding — Taraloka, or the "the realm of Tara." We are a community of Western women Buddhists affiliated with the FWBO, and we run a retreat center especially for women.

In 1985, the four founding members of the community moved into the old farmhouse, which became the community house. They immediately began converting the surrounding buildings into facilities where retreats for women could be held. Teams of women from all over the world continue to be involved in the building work, learning skills which are more often the province of men: bricklaying, roofing, electrical wiring, plumbing, and laying concrete floors.

Members of Taraloka community, Shropshire, England

Eight women now live at Taraloka. The youngest is 31, the oldest 68. Members come from England, Scotland, Holland, New Zealand and Australia. This spring, another two women will join us, from England and Australia. A long-term guest from France will also join the community for a few months this year. We often have short-term guests staying with us as well.

All year round we run a continuous program of retreats — from weekend meditation workshops for complete newcomers to Buddhism, to month-long preordination retreats for women intending to enter the Western Buddhist Order. There are also intensive meditation retreats, as well as seasonal retreats featuring talks, study, meditation and discussion. This year, we're planning a weekend that will explore grief and its impact on our lives, an experimental week for black women, and a week to examine the links between artistic creativity and the spiritual life. ◆

Taraloka is the only Buddhist retreat center for women in Europe. More information can be obtained by writing: The Secretary, Taraloka, Cornhill Farm, Bettisfield, Nr. Whitchurch, N. Shropshire SY13 2LV, England.

A Cell of Light

— Social action and Zen in a Catholic community —

by Maria-Christina Eggers
translated from the German by Heidi Rudolph

St. Katharina-Werk is a community of about 40 people — celibate women and men, along with non-celibate couples — in Basel, Switzerland. Catholic in origin, it is now open to anyone who has a deep interest in the power of "reconciliation in diversity" to make a better world. Zen meditation is an important aspect of St. Katharina-Werk, as well as social action, as this article describes. There are also some smaller satellite St. Katharina-Werk communities in Germany, Switzerland, and the Philippines.

Lucelle, Switzerland is in the heart of the Jura mountains. There are dense forests, limestone caves, a small lake, and only three or four houses. Far from any city, Lucelle breathes silence.

In about 1100 AD a monastery was founded here, where monks lived the contemplative life for 700 years. Now only a vault and gate remain from the old buildings, but the concentrated energy of centuries of meditation is still to be felt. The monastery gave its Latin name to Lucelle — *Lucis Cella* — cell of light.

Pia Gyger (kneeling, right) with new and old community members

Today, there is a contemplative center near the old monastery, which is owned by our Catholic community, St. Katharina-Werk. This week, we come together for a Zen *sesshin* (silent retreat), led by our director, Pia Gyger. There are about 50 participants, mostly members of St. Katharina-Werk, but others from outside, some from faraway places.

***

It is a silent, very dark night. In silence, we go to our last sitting of the day in the newly built chapel. We walk in two lines, preparing to sit on our cushions, our faces to the wall. In the deep quiet, the meditative concentration is in great evidence.

After twenty minutes, the bell rings for *kinhin* (walking meditation). In front of me is Mila, a Filipina woman. She met Pia in 1985 in Kamakura, Japan, where both had been Zen students of the late Koun Yamada Roshi (Robert Aitken Roshi's principle teacher and lineage holder in the *Sanbo Kyodan* — Order of Three Treasures — stream of Zen). Through their friendship, the two began a Philippine project, which works with the inhabitants of Ibayo, a slum area on the outskirts of Manila. Mila works in Ibayo as a social activist and meditation teacher. Members of St. Katharina-Werk regularly go to live at Ibayo to experience (in Pia's words) a "broadening of consciousness for 'First World' people through contact close to the skin with very poor people." Members of our community started a textile manufacturing project in Ibayo; finished products are sold at a just price in Europe.

Then there is Notburga, a woman in her seventies. She sits on a chair (unable to sit on the floor because of sore joints) with the same concentration as the younger members. When she became a member of St. Katharina-Werk forty years ago, it was a more conventional Catholic community. The sisters took care of young girls who had become drug abusers and prostitutes.

Gabi walks in front of me in the *kinhin* line. She and her husband Köbes were the first couple to take vows as St. Katharina-Werk members. Along with two other couples, they are starting a St. Katharina-Werk community for families in Germany.

Ursula claps two wooden sticks together, announcing the end of *kinhin*. This woman's long experience as a psychotherapist serves here well in her work at St. Katharina-Werk's home for seriously disturbed young girls. She is also spearheading our new Center for the Encounter of World Religions, a project born of Pia Gyger's intimate experience with both Christianity and Zen Buddhism. The center is to be a place where Christians offer hospitality to members of other religions, to encourage a "dialogue of experience" that would be a source of hope and community in working towards mutual transformation.

***

Pia Gyger, our current director and teacher, joined the community in the '60s, at a time when St. Katharina-Werk, like many Christian communities, was undergoing a crisis: there were no young people, and the old spirituality offered little to inspire either its own members or the "outside" community. Of that early time, Pia writes:

"Since I was 15 years old, I've been occupied with the question: *What is love?* Today, at 52, the question has not lost its power and meaning for me; quite the contrary. The question forms my life more and more fundamentally and radically. But it has changed its emphasis over the years. In my twenties, when I joined St. Katharina-Werk, the question became: *How can I become a human being with the capacity to love?* This question is what really motivated me, at age 27, to become a member of St. Katharina-Werk.

"At 27, it was already obvious to me that none of us can become human beings capable of love without the ability for reconciliation. What I wanted was to live in a group, learning with others to awaken the sleeping power of reconciliation within ourselves. Now, after working as an educator, supervisor, and therapist, I find myself more and more interested in the inner and outer conditions that foster or hinder an awakening of the power for love in human beings.

"I have been greatly influenced by the work of Teilhard de Chardin, a paleontologist and mystic. As a scientist, he had been engaged in looking at how humankind had come into existence. Toward the end of his life, the burning question for him became: *What is the future of humankind?* In resolving this question, de Chardin arrived at the fundamental law that explained the origin of humankind: the law of integrative unification. I remember well the day I read these words, which struck me like a lightning bolt: 'Elemental particles gravitate to one another. Atoms combine to form cells, cells to form life, human beings to form humankind. In all, the same law applies: Unification will lead to something greater.' I knew, in that moment, that I had found a key to answering my questions about love. I understood: the capability for deeper unification is the key to any psychological and spiritual progress."

Pia's insight had consequences not only for her own life, but for all of St. Katharina-Werk as well. One consequence was that the community was broadened to include celibate men and couples (as well as celibate women). The Center for the Encounter of World Religions is another result, born of Pia's interest in an encounter between Christians and members of other religions and cultures.

In community, we strive to live the reality of integrative unification. To the degree that we accomplish that goal, our capacity for love grows accordingly. All of us who are part of St. Katharina-Werk have changed tremendously living together. We experience a greater autonomy and competence in our lives. But there is a price. We must accept the pain of the process: old wounds from relationships break open, wounds which are sometimes as old as childhood; the confrontation with our shadow selves and the characteristics we don't like; and a temporary uncertainty about our identities, whenever we begin to slip off our masks and renounce our familiar role-playing. But none of us wants to go back to the old ways.

Most of us would agree, I think, that our close circle of community is only possible because Pia took the Zen path many years ago and continues today. When she first went to Japan, she went as not a disappointed Christian, but as a devoted and enthusiastic one. In fact, she has not lost her Christian identity in these years working with Yamada Roshi, and more recently with Aitken

Friends in Ibayo, Philippines

Roshi and the late Father Lassalle; that identity has deepened. During her sojourn in Hawaii, Aitken Roshi introduced her to several people who were eager for an interfaith encounter between people of different religions. This experience inspired her to intensify the dialogue between members of St. Katharina-Werk and Buddhists. One result: in the summer of 1991, some members of our community helped plan and then participated in a class at the University of Hawaii at Hilo, "Comparative Religion: Buddhism and Christianity."

During the Gulf War, Pia was practicing Zen with Aitken Roshi in Hawaii. Upset by the events in the Middle East, she fasted, and then began a new St. Katharina-Werk project: The Institute for the Development of a Spiritual and Political Consciousness in Basel, Switzerland. The purpose of the Institute is to find ways to increase planetary consciousness of the process of integrative unification — and to encourage a profound change in values (for instance, to begin to discard hierarchical and patriarchal structures). The Institute focuses on public awareness projects, and also intends to influence politicians in their actions and policies.

Today, 90 percent of the members of St. Katharina-Werk practice Zen meditation. For all of us, there is great strength growing out of our practice. As we sit together, we know that whatever exists is an expression of the unity that is our deepest motivation and the promise for reconciliation and exchange between all peoples. ❖

For more information about St. Katharina-Werk and its programs, write: St. Katharina-Werk, Holeestrasse 123, CH-4015 Basel, Switzerland. Tel. 41/061-301-2323, fax 41/061-301-1714.

A Conversation with the Catholic Workers

THE FAMILY KITCHEN

by Ed Byrne and Dionne Haroutunian

The Catholic Worker movement was started in the 1930s by Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin. They believed we all have personal responsibility for each other, especially for the poorest of the poor. They began "houses of hospitality" where works of mercy are practiced and where Workers often live together as an intentional community. Today, each Catholic Worker community (of which there are over 100 in the U.S., Canada, and Australia) decides for itself what kind of social action work it will engage in.

Larry Kyle, Kay Peters, and Jennifer Moore are longtime members and founders of the Seattle Catholic Worker community, which runs a meal program called the Family Kitchen for poor and homeless people.

Jennifer Moore, Erin Kyle-Peters, Larry Kyle and Kay Peters after collecting food for the day's meal.

Larry: We have been and are still considered a Catholic Worker community — although the "Catholic" is pretty small now in our minds. All Catholic Worker houses are autonomous. In this house, Kay and I practice Zen meditation. We have a meditation hall, and the Three Treasures Sangha of the Pacific Northwest has an office here in the house. Kay and I are Catholics, have been since childhood, and still have some association and identity — at least I do — with the church. But Buddhism is becoming more an inspiration and support too. So we're sort of Zen-Catholic-Buddhists — with a bit of Jewish influence thrown in, too.

Throughout the history of our house — since 1975 — there've been people of all faiths, and even some with no faith, who've been here doing the work and living in community. Anybody who wants to put energy into community and into helping people in need is welcome.

Kay: We're here to serve, and anyone who joins the community has to commit themselves to the Family Kitchen. The other major reason we're here is to develop our personal selves in community, to really figure out how to do that. We're always discovering new ways to do it.

Jennifer: The Family Kitchen feeds women, children, and elderly people five days a week. It's run almost solely by volunteers; only one woman gets a stipend because she works a lot. Everyone has a specific role — cooking, cleaning up, greeting the guests — but we also have to respond to unexpected needs that come up. The phones are constantly ringing!

LK: We make sure people are served in a way we think is respectful, make sure volunteers are taken care of. We actually do the Family Kitchen program at St. James Cathedral. The Church doesn't charge us any rent, and they pay the utilities.

BPF: Do you all live together in the Catholic Worker house?

LK: Not all of us. There are really two communities — the people who run the Family Kitchen program, some of whom live in the house, and the house community, which right now consists of four people. The house community is the smallest it's ever been in the last 17 years. Generally we've had 10 to 14 people, which has included from 2 to 6 children at times.

BPF: How is your community financed?

KP: The program is run entirely on private donations; we don't get any grants. Our budget for 1991 was about $35,000. The way we get food is, in the morning, somebody takes the Kitchen van and goes around and picks up food that would normally be thrown away — food that has spots, or is too soft, or can't be sold because it's shelf-dated. We collect from several grocery stores, from food co-ops, and a few restaurants. We also get some government surplus food — rice, noodles, peanut butter. Sometimes a church group will have leftovers from a big dinner. And at Thanksgiving or Christmas, people will donate turkeys.

Probably half our money goes to help people directly. We make a lot of donations to people who come to us: money for laundry, diapers, a deposit on an apartment. We give away money as long as we have it.

BPF: How do people make contact with you?

LK: Well, they come to the Kitchen to eat, and we have sympathetic ears. Food is a means to meet people, it's what we can do. But I think we're there for bigger reasons than food. We get to know the people who come here regularly. Sometimes their lives are in trouble, for lots of different reasons — like alcohol or abuse of other substances. Most are women with families.

continued on page 37

A View from the Outside

THE BREAKFAST CLUB

By Michael Acutt
based on a conversation with Susan Moon

Michael Acutt has been a Buddhist practitioner for twenty years. He currently lives at an urban Zen center, but used to live "outside" as a homeless person in Berkeley, California.

Is there a sense of community among people living on the outside? Absolutely. I used to belong to a group of outsiders called the Breakfast Club. We'd meet at the grill in Ohlone Park around 6:30 every morning, then we would ritualistically empty our pockets and pool our change on the picnic table. We'd buy beer or wine, to try and get everybody "well." And then after reading the paper and kibbitzing and passing the latest street news — who just got out of jail, who got arrested last night — we'd split up into parties and go to work.

Begging is a form of work — I want to make that clear. A lot of people think the homeless are shiftless bums who wouldn't do an honest day's work if you paid them. It's true there *are* folks out there like that, and I have mixed feelings about it. Certainly much of the available work in 20th century America is so demeaning that begging seems like a viable alternative. So anyway, the "homeless" people I know and was one of (and they don't call themselves homeless) will be sitting around the park reading the paper and smoking a cigarette and having *satsang* or whatever, and that sort of magic moment arrives when there are no more libations, or somebody's hungry, so they decide to have a cookout. Someone will say, "Well, I'll take McDonald's, how about if you guys do the benches next to the French Hotel, and we'll meet back here at three." And somebody else will say, "OK, let's not get too scattered. What are we going for? We'll get sausages, eggs, bread and beer, and we'll meet back here." It can be quite organized.

A lot of people think the homeless are shiftless bums who wouldn't do an honest day's work if you paid them. But begging is work. Try it for a day!

Some people on the outside are in the tradition of the mendicant monk. I know a man called Coach, a former professor in his early 60's, who has lived outside for many years. He's a father figure for many folks on the street — a peacemaker, mediator, and general cooler-outer of difficult situations. He's one of the beer-sipping kind of alcoholics. He's always clean and well-presented, well read, up to the minute on external reality, one of the most compassionate men I've ever met, a very articulate and interesting man. He came of age in the 1950s, and was imbued with that sort of beat, Kerouac-y spirit and just never bothered to reenter the mainstream.

Coach has been deemed mentally disturbed by the State and receives a social security check, so he could be living inside somewhere. But he *chooses* to live outside. He likes sleeping under the trees and stars, doesn't like rules and regulations, small confined spaces. He likes his family — who are the "outsiders." Coach always has Band-Aids and aspirin, vitamins, or ointment for a cut, first-aid advice for the kinds of things that occur on the street. He's very welcoming, and deeply sad about the condition of humanity, which he sees quite clearly.

Some interesting things happen on the street. One night around last Thanksgiving, I was standing on Vine Street early in the evening, with my bedroll under my arm. I remember I had nine cents in my pocket. I was just standing there, deciding whether to go panhandle and get a cup of coffee, or go lie down somewhere. A man walked by me, I'd say roughly my age, 40-ish, expensive clothes and briefcase, perhaps a musician or radical lawyer. He got about ten feet past me, turned, and said, "Are you homeless?" I had to think for a second, because I always disidentify, out of denial, but I said yes. So he stepped up to me and handed me a bill. I said "Well, thank you," and he walked away. I held it up to the streetlight just so I could see what it was, and by that time he was about thirty feet away, and he turned around and said, "It's real — " (he could see me examining it) — "be careful where you spend it." I saw that it was a hundred dollar bill, and a jolt of electricity rushed through me and all these doors of opportunity opened.

I ran around the corner to this cafe (where I've been known for many years in previous incarnations as a well-dressed inside person) to cash it, because I was worried about whether it was real or not, and I was worried about having a hundred dollar bill on the street. I ordered a caffe latte, and got 98 dollars and a few cents change and stuffed it in my pocket and stood outside sort of throbbing with adrenaline. I immediately wanted to share my good fortune with one of my *compadres*, and the first person I bumped into a few minutes later was a former lead guitarist of several rock bands, a guy called Berkeley Red — one of the people on the street who *doesn't* drink, used to take a lot of amphetamines, but doesn't use anything now. I said, "Hey, Dave, let's have dinner." He said, "Yeah, in the park?" I said, "No, let's have real dinner. There's this great Chinese restaurant, Vegie Foods, right here." He said, "*Inside*? I

continued on next page

haven't been inside a restaurant in about ten years!"

"What'll I do? What'll I do?" he kept saying, once we were inside the restaurant. I said, "Just copy me." And he would pick up the fork and say, "Is this right? Are they all watching me?" Of course, the people in the restaurant were, like most people everywhere, totally self-absorbed in their own private worlds. Nobody gives a rat's ass about your divorce or whatever. And the staff in the restaurant were very kind. We had hot and sour soup, and then after we had another dish, we both began to get the sweats and the shakes. He was getting the sweats from the soup and I needed a drink. So we left.

Three times I went cold turkey on the street. To replace the next-fix-focus, I'd examine my immediate needs, make a shopping list and beg for the list. My feet would be pretty wounded by this time with cuts and sores, so I'd get ointment and bandages. Then I'd buy scissors, razor, shampoo, deodorant, and all those little things that make me feel human. I can only beg for so long. I guess it's partly about self esteem. Self esteem is reinforced by others, and what you get from others when you're begging is negative esteem. You're esteemed as an asshole and a blight on society.

© 1987 Elly Simmons, "Street Hunger #2," from a postcard series (PO Box 463, Lagunitas, CA 94938)

Within days of getting sober, I'd find myself working again; it's simply easier than begging. I'd sleep in the park and start saving to get inside. One more time!

Now that I'm formally practicing meditation again on a daily basis, and I'm living in a sangha inside that has at its heart active compassion, I feel less nervous about being with my former *compadres* than I did when my sangha was primarily AA. I owe my very life to my friends in AA, but I feel supported in a different way by a Buddhist sangha. People here don't think it's weird that I keep friendships with the poor and oppressed.

When I was on the outside, I felt my situation was temporary, but I tried not to think about it. I tried to stay in a particular state of consciousness which was very much in the present, and eliminated the past and future. I needed a certain level of alcohol in the blood to maintain this consciousness. It was painful to think soberly about what had brought me to the street, and what was keeping me there, and what I was not doing about the rest of my life. In my case, I felt it was my responsibility that I was on the outside. But I also know folks who were so badly damaged as children that it's almost inevitable that they end up outside the system. Damaged by their parents, and schooling — not necessarily poverty, but emotional and spiritual deprivation. By the time folks become outsiders, if they're substance abusers, they frequently descend from more interesting drugs to alcohol. A big part of it is its social availability — it's cheap, and ever-present at Mom & Pop stores. You can get it a 6 AM. You can beg a few pennies for a bottle of wine; you don't have to steal a car radio or pull some other nonsense and involve yourself in breaking the law.

And there are many folks on the street who don't use alcohol or drugs. Others are on hospital drugs, which frequently makes it difficult for them to be employed. In some cases, the drugs and their side-effects make it even more difficult for them to function in society than if they were just dealing with their hallucinations and voices. It's hard to dig a ditch when you're doing the Thorazine shuffle! (I worked as a counselor for schizophrenics in London for several years, so this isn't a flip observation.)

Now that I'm inside again, I know that this too is impermanent. Having a room of one's own, a warm place to sleep, a place to take a shower, is an extraordinary luxury, a wonderful gift that on a daily basis I reflect is not shared by millions of souls all over this planet. Folks on the outside in this country are in the minority, but they share the reality of most people on this planet — which is that life is dangerous and difficult, everything is in short supply, and you never know how long you're going to live.

Afterword: *Reflecting on this conversation after almost a year, I'm struck by a few things. What was I trying to say, exactly? There's no thesis here, just a slice of life as I experienced it. I hope it illuminates a little of what it's like to live on the street. (For an excellent philosophical overview of "homelessness," check out Peter Marin's article from* Harper's, *reprinted in the Jan/Feb '88* Utne Reader.*) I also had to look at my own bourgeois reluctance to own my derelict days, real name and all! I do so out of affection for my friends still "out there."*

As for Buddhist perspectives, here are a couple: I remember sitting on the sidewalk a few years ago, begging on a dreary, drizzling day, and suddenly realizing that I was existing in the Realm of the Hungry Ghosts. Somehow our necks had gotten too thin to take in life's readily available sustenance. So there we were, no gun to our heads, going hungry at the banquet table.

Second, since Buddha is the "awakened one," I always translate Buddhism, if asked, as "wake-uppery." My experiences of deprivation and dirt, rejection and compassion, beauty and ugliness, have indeed served as a vehicle for awakening. For that I'm grateful. I express that gratitude quietly, acting as a bridge for street people who I know personally, and who are ready to "come inside." Stay warm! ❖

Continued from page 34

KP: One goal of the Family Kitchen is to provide a space for community to happen. People who eat together get to know each other, and then help each other out.

BPF: Have you noticed any changes over the years in who comes to the Family Kitchen ?

LK: After Reagan came in, we saw a huge increase in the number of people we serve. The program was real small before that — 100 a day was the top number served in a month. Two years after Reagan was elected, we were seeing 200 a day. During the last five years, we've been seeing more people who are working a job but still don't have money. People are working hard for $5 to $6 an hour, and they can't afford their apartment and food. Sometimes people come to us just to get food; we give away stuff like canned goods.

KP: Plus we give away any food we don't use in a meal. We have the trust that the next day we'll get everything we need, and we almost always do. It's amazing that we spend the smallest amount of our budget on food.

JM: Wasn't there a time when somebody brought in 200 hot dog buns, and an hour later somebody brought in 200 hot dogs?

KP: And then somebody else brought in mustard and ketchup. It's just amazing.

BPF: Do you ever have to turn people away?

KP: Yes, single men aged 18 – 55. We send them to other programs because we wanted to make a place where women and children would feel comfortable. But we don't ever turn anyone away because we don't have enough food. At the end of the meal, all the leftovers are given away, as much as anyone wants. And the raw food we didn't use that day is also put out to be taken home.

LK: We don't serve people who've been drinking or who've been abusive to us. We've banned people for periods of time. There are no hard and fast rules; as a

continued on next page

Always Failing

by Lynn Lassalle-Klein

Lynn Lassalle-Klein is a member of the Catholic Worker community in Oakland, California, where she works primarily with political refugees from Central America.

A big part of the Catholic Worker — probably the most challenging and problematic part — is voluntary poverty and precarity. Precarity is the belief that you simply seek the kingdom of God and all else will be given to you — not storing up resources, but keeping it small and relying on God to provide sustenance for the project. Some communities give away surpluses of money if they have it. Dorothy Day called voluntary poverty the "central plank" of the Catholic Worker movement, but I think that is sometimes misunderstood. I don't believe voluntary poverty is really possible if you come from the middle class; you'll always have access to wealth that the underclass won't, because you come from a family with some money, or you have an education. I don't believe class suicide is possible. Living *simply* is very possible — and it's much more complicated than how many material goods you have. It's where you live, how you're spending your time. It's *especially* about where you live. I must admit, I don't think just giving away all you own is a particularly admirable thing.

To foster a sense of personal responsibility, most Catholic Worker houses don't incorporate, and they don't take a tax-deductible status. We want people to donate money without being able to write it off their taxes, but rather to give out of what they live on — *real* sharing, *real* personalism.

Most Catholic Worker houses are in urban areas. About a year ago, we had an event at our house, and I was giving someone directions over the phone for how to get there. And he said, "Why are you in that area, it's so *bad*! Nobody's going to want to come down there." But that's exactly why we're here — because there's such a need. But it's not easy. Boy, when I go to my brother's house, and I sit on his porch swing, I think, "This is beautiful. Who wouldn't want this? What's wrong with wanting a little piece of property in a nice neighborhood?" The problem is that this type of life is inaccessible to so many people, and the reality of poverty and destitution is hidden away in "bad" neighborhoods.

Dorothy Day used to say quite openly, "We're always failing." When I hear that, I think — she's right. It never works out quite the way we want it to. A big part of the Catholic Worker is about not looking for results. Because we *are* always failing. What we do is really just a drop in the bucket. Even though we do political work, nonviolent resistance, risking arrest over issues we believe in, the most important thing is building the kingdom of God *now*, on earth. The quality of what we do now is very important. Paying attention to that person in need, to my *relationship* to that person. And not focusing on becoming some big movement. It's the small things that will change the world slowly. We've taken it into our hands — a bunch of volunteers. We go through all the struggles of being a community, all the different personalities, different agendas. I need my community and my faith, but I don't need the institution of "the Church" to be God's church. *I'm* the church. *We're* the church. ❖

community, we talk about it when problems come up, and then decide what to do. We always try to give people a second . . . or third or fourth chance.

LK: We started the Family Kitchen to provide a place where people can get what they need without too much trouble. But it's hard for people who are used to working and providing for themselves to ask for help. We try to minimize that by not asking questions. There's no sermon they have to listen to. A lot of missions in inner cities are run by religious groups who want to convert people. We don't do any of that. You don't have to be a certain religion. You just have to be respectful of other people, and with us. When someone's a problem, we keep them from coming in until they can act a little more decently to other people.

BPF: Do any people come looking for spiritual guidance?

KP: No, people come to the Kitchen because there's some good food, a warm place, and some company.

BPF: They're hungry.

LK: A lot of people who come think the Church organizes it. They assume there's some religious aspect to it.

BPF: Does that seem important to people?

KP: Only when they're getting kicked out.

LK: Yeah, "I'm Catholic, you can't kick me out of here."

KP: "I come to this church all the time. God wouldn't kick me out of here."

JM: The spiritual aspect is more important to volunteers. They sometimes seem more interested in the Catholic Worker movement than the feeding program.

BPF: So, what kind of community do you — the people running the program — have?

LK: Most of us have put our entire lives into starting the Kitchen and keeping it going. We don't get any money for it. We all support ourselves however we can to be able to do the work and live here. Most of us work half-time. It's a lot cheaper to live in the house here and share expenses than if we had our own houses. Of course, privacy is an issue in a community like this.

KP: We each have our own rooms, and nobody is allowed in someone else's room without permission. I think the lack of privacy is one of those things you first resign yourself to, then come to embrace.

LK: There's no doubt in my mind that we're doing something different than most people out there, who are living by themselves or with one or two other family members or friends. There's a difference between coming together intentionally as we have and just living together because it's cheaper. That doesn't make a difference in a larger sense, in the society.

In this country, the way we consume resources, it's really not sustainable for every family or couple to continue living the way they do. I want to live a life that's more just, that benefits people in other places. You use fewer resources when you live together in a big house, and that lowers your impact on the world. Our community ripples out to the greater community via the Family Kitchen. We support each other in that, and hopefully it'll keep rippling, help create a world where people aren't so concerned about their wealth. It's important to be concerned about others, to know you have the basic necessities of life and are going to give what you have to others, invite others into your home, because you're solid enough to do that. A more integrated life — work, family, community, service — these are just *life*, you know. This is just normal life, living with others. We aren't doing anything special. We all need to live with people who can mirror who we are. That's the way we get healed.

But there are some communities that serve people who are psychologically wounded, and that's a very difficult situation. Your mirrors are not going to be very good. It's more like a cracked mirror.

You have to put your life where your mouth is. In Buddhist terms, it's where the lotus meets the dirt.

KP: A community is like life in a fishbowl.

LK: You learn to accept and really know who you are. Maybe you've always thought of yourself as friendly, and somebody says, "You're really cranky this morning."

BPF: Is there something in the community environment that causes people to grow?

KP: I don't know if it causes people to grow, but you can't live in one without intending to look at yourself. We certainly ask people who are interested in living here if they're willing to change, because if they aren't, they shouldn't be here.

LK: One of our cofounders wrote a poem about creating a situation where it's "easier to be good." I think a community helps with that. You get support for who you are, and that makes it easier for you to live your values. You don't always get that kind of support in society, so we created our own little society here out of mutual support and admiration. Things can't happen for me without community, because I don't have enough wisdom by myself.

Some people question what we're doing, ask what good it does to give people money. They say we're codependent, that we're "enabling" them. But we look at it a different way. It's active *inter*dependence. It's from the heart. Of course, we do have to watch being codependent, and the community gives feedback on that.

We are mutually interdependent. That's the way the universe is. So you have to put your life where your mouth is. In Buddhist terms, it's where the lotus meets the dirt. It's through the everyday passions, the ups and downs, that you can flower. ❖

Ed Byrne and Dionne Haroutunian are members of the Seattle chapter of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship.

from ego-self to eco-self

Toward an Ecocentric Community

by Bruce A. Byers

Any discussion of community that addresses only its *human* dimension is incomplete. As Aldo Leopold, the pioneer American ecologist and ecophilosopher said, an ecocentric view "changes the role of *Homo sapiens* from conqueror of the land-community to plain member and citizen of it." Arne Naess, the "father" of deep ecology, wrote a paper titled "Self-realization in Mixed Communities of Humans, Bears, Sheep, and Wolves." Our lives depend on mixed-species ecological communities whether we recognize it or not.

Chico Mendes, the Brazilian peasant who was murdered because he organized rubber tappers and other forest people to nonviolently oppose the cutting of the rainforests upon which their lives depended, is sometimes portrayed as a "tree hugger," willing to give his life to defend the forest. But Mendes' real wisdom was to recognize that one cannot be a "people hugger" without being a "tree hugger," and vice versa.

Innuit (Eskimo) print, artist unknown

Yet some people — notably "social ecologist" Murray Bookchin (see "Will Ecology Become the Dismal Science?" in *The Progressive*, December '91) — have made the charge that environmentalists are "reactionary misanthropes." Bookchin understands correctly that deep ecology promotes an ecocentric perspective and rejects anthropocentrism. (Ecocentrism recognizes that other species, and even whole ecosystems, have an intrinsic value and right to existence apart from any "instrumental" or "use" value they may have to humans. Anthropocentrism, in contrast, is a hierarchical view in which humans are assumed to be the pinnacle of evolution, and of greater value than any other species.) But to equate ecocentrism with misanthropy is a complete misunderstanding. In fact, deep ecology argues that if you really love humans you *must* love and defend the biosphere that is their only home.

Why must we be ecocentric in order to love humans and sustain human communities? One answer flows naturally from the Buddhist view of "dependent co-arising" (*paticca samupadda* in Pali) and its metaphor in the Avatamsaka Sutra, the Net of Indra. Because of the net-like, interdependent structure of reality — what Thich Nhat Hanh calls "interbeing" — what we do to the natural world, we ultimately do to ourselves. Robert Aitken Roshi has called Indra's Net "the harmony of universal symbiosis."

Ecology and evolution provide concrete evidence of the interdependence or "interbeing" of ecological communities. Nutrient cycles show this clearly. For example, animals take in oxygen from the air in order to release the energy from their food, and in the process create and release carbon dioxide; plants use carbon dioxide in photosynthesis and release oxygen as a waste product. Food chains and food webs — metaphors for the flow of energy through ecosystems — also illustrate this interdependence. A food-web diagram of a species-rich ecosystem like a tropical forest or coral reef provides a beautiful image of the Net of Indra.

Evolution, over eons of time, has shaped interdependent and sometimes even cooperative relationships within ecological communities. Predators and their prey are clearly shaped by these evolutionary forces. Wolves and mountain lions, for example, are responsible for the fleetness and grace of deer; and deer are responsible for the ferocity and stealth of their predators. Insect-eating birds are responsible for the beautiful camouflage of moths, and moth camouflage is responsible for the sharp vision of birds. Parasites and their hosts also can co-evolve relationships of mutual dependence; relationships that begin as harmful to the host and beneficial to the parasite seem often to evolve into relationships that are mutually beneficial. Lichens, reef-building corals, and the nitrogen-fixing bacteria that live in the root-nodules of legumes may all be examples of this coevolution of cooperation.

If we took the idea of ecocentric communities seriously, how could we best protect the jobs of loggers in the Pacific Northwest and the economies of the logging communities they support, not to mention supplying the needs of the rest of us for affordable building materials, paper, and other forest products? By making certain that logging is an ecologically sustainable economic activity — otherwise we would condemn loggers, or their children, to the economic collapse of their means of livelihood. Developing forestry practices that are ecologically

sustainable in the long term probably requires that we protect the last relict stands of old growth forests. They are a natural ecological laboratory in which forest ecologists can study, and perhaps come to understand (which they do not now) the complex processes that make forests sustainable. These ancient forests are also a repository of genetically diverse trees, which could allow future forests to adapt to changes in climate, or outbreaks of new pests or diseases. People employed by the "forest products industry" take it as a matter of faith that tree "farming," which replaces a complex forest ecosystem with a genetic monoculture of nursery-bred trees, is ecologically sustainable, but there is no history to prove that it is. The spotted owl, marbled murrelet, and other endangered species of the ancient forests of the Pacific Northwest should be seen as the "miners' canaries" of the logging industry, warning of imminent danger if we continue to mine out the old growth.

Wolves and mountain lions are responsible for the fleetness and grace of deer; and deer are responsible for the ferocity and stealth of their predators.

How can we best love and support the native people of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge area, some of whom *want* oil development? Certainly not by getting them hooked on the short-term economic benefits of an extractive, oil-based economy, but by encouraging them to maintain the health of their traditional, sustainable subsistence economy based on hunting caribou, birds, seals and other sea mammals, and fishing.

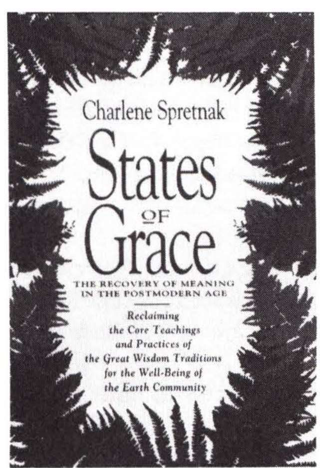
These examples may give the impression that I am arguing for preserving other species and the "land-community" because of their instrumental value to people — to provide renewable resources, as a repository of genetic diversity, or as an early warning system to warn humans of ecological collapse — rather than for their intrinsic value. The Buddhist perspective of interbeing suggests that the distinction between the intrinsic and instrumental values of nonhuman species, a distinction so often debated by ecophilosophers, is based on a false view of reality. The distinction between intrinsic and instrumental value blurs when the view of "self" is widened from an "ego-self" to an "eco-self."

The Net-of-Indra view of reality suggests our own radical complicity in both causing and solving ecological problems. On the negative side, anything we do affects the whole system; our ecological "sins" have a global reach. When we drive gas-guzzling cars, don't hang our clothes in the sun to dry, or don't recycle our paper, it will come back around to affect us. Eating bananas, tuna, or fast-food hamburgers influences the life-potential of other beings, both human and nonhuman, around the globe. But on the positive side, when we do something right, no matter how small, it sends ripples of healing throughout the whole system. So hanging our clothes out to dry, taking the bus, and growing an organic garden will help to save the whales and the forest peoples of the Amazon, and prevent another war in the Persian Gulf. Taking this view seriously gives rise to humility, compassion, and an "eco-bodhisattva" ethic of environmental action. ❖

Bruce Byers is a student of Zen and a member of BPF. He has a doctorate in ecology, and is director of a new Environmental Studies Program at the Naropa Institute, a program that emphasizes the ecocentric perspective of deep ecology.

Deanna Forbes

Book review —
States of Grace: The Recovery of Meaning in the Postmodern Age
by Charlene Spretnak



HarperCollins Publishers, 1991, $21.95

Reviewed by Marie Pace

States of Grace is an important and timely effort to bring spiritual and ecological awareness to mainstream intellectual thinking. For anyone who has encountered the "sophisticated" stance of disengagement and passivity which mocks anyone who is concerned for the state of our world, this book is a must.

States of Grace is spun from an awareness of the very real crisis which threatens the future of our home planet. The author pinpoints the prevailing sense that the modern industrial age, with its wondrous technology and the promises of a plentiful and effortless world, has failed us. She describes how The Great March of Progress has become a race with the clock against the momentum of destructiveness. And how, in response, there has emerged from many quarters a questioning of the assumptions and ways of thinking that have characterized the modern age. A mode of analysis currently popular in intellectual circles is "deconstructive postmodernism," which seeks to reveal the cultural construction of concepts generally assumed to be natural or universal. According to the deconstructionists, "the grand belief systems or 'metanarratives' of modernity are illusory and were socially produced to exert diffuse means of control" over people.

Woven throughout the book is a critique of deconstructive postmodernists; Spretnak asserts that they are "spiritually adrift." By dismissing all other perceptions of reality, they are themselves locked in the "prisonhouse of language." "Far from escaping the atomized, alienated sensibility of modernity, the new relativism intensifies it." In other words, what is called *post*-modern is in fact *hyper*-modern.

Spretnak has succeeded in making postmodernism understandable (no small feat since — although it is the number one buzzword in academic circles — most people admit they don't really know what it means). But more importantly she challenges the common postmodern assumptions that spirituality has nothing to do with pragmatic concerns and has no place in "advanced" thinking.

More than anything, *States of Grace* is about engagement, about moving towards a new ethos of spiritual and ontological being. The author reminds us that just because science has proclaimed that reality is a vibratory flux of web-like patterns of energy, that does not mean we can instantly discard four hundred years of cultural conditioning. Only through engaged forms of practice can we hope to undermine modernity's grip. The author suggests that if we choose to look beyond the confining parameters of the modern era, humanity already possesses a treasure of resources — namely, in the form of the wisdom traditions — that can aid us in our transition to a more ecologically and cosmologically grounded era.

Explored in the four central chapters of the book are the core teachings and practices of Buddhism, Native American spirituality, contemporary Goddess spirituality, and the Semitic traditions (Judaism, Christianity, Islam). Specifically, each tradition is considered for what it has to offer to a different dimension of human existence: Buddhism on the nature of mind; Native American spirituality on our relationship with nature; Goddess spirituality for what it has to offer in awakening the erotic sensibilities of the earthbody/personal body; and the Semitic traditions on community and social justice. The thesis of the book is that "the core teachings and practices of the wisdom traditions — regardless of what sorts of institutional forms may have grown up around them — are thoroughly subversive to the monstrous reduction of the fullness of being that the Earth community currently faces through the dynamics of an increasingly manipulative, globalized, consumption-oriented political economy based on rapacious growth and the supposedly pragmatic destruction of being-in-relation."

States of Grace contains a wealth of fresh insights aimed towards healing the pathos of the modern industrial era. It is a bold and incisive work which deserves attention. The comprehensiveness of Spretnak's response to the failed assumptions of modernity makes this book a valuable gift, one that offers many openings for re-embracing the world of grace. ❖

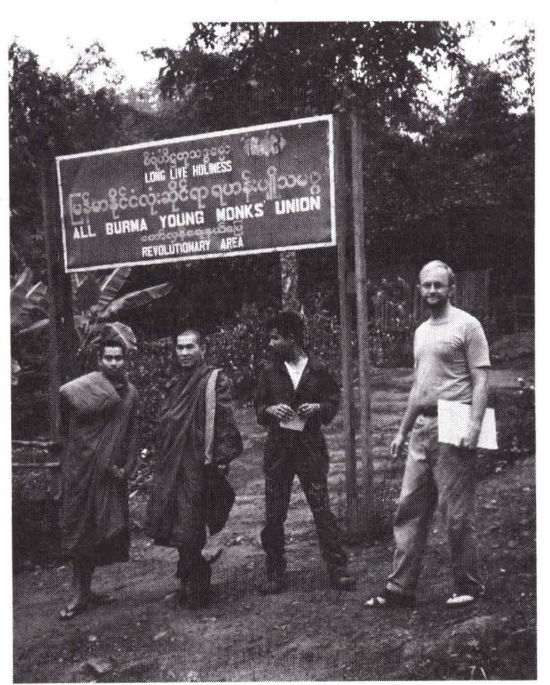
Marie Pace is a BPF member who lives in Oregon. She is currently doing research on the Sarvodaya project in Sri Lanka.

Coordinator's Report

March 27, 1992

Today is the deadline — a chilling word, if you think about it — set by the Burmese military government for its capture of Manerplaw, headquarters of Burma's democracy movement. I'm finding it hard to sit here and write, waiting for the phone to ring, carrying news of this battle half a world away. These events so distant are particularly real to me, since I returned from Thailand and Burma only three weeks ago. Following the International Network of Engaged Buddhists conference, twelve of us went as a witness delegation to Manerplaw as guests of the All Burma Young Monks' Union. We also visited student and refugee camps on the Thai side of the border, across the Moie River from Burma.

Manerplaw is liberated territory for monks, students, Karen ethnics and others, free from the grasp of Burma's brutal military government, SLORC. The ramshackle town, with its schools, clinics, and shelters, sprawls for nearly a mile along the river, tucked away in a beautiful spot among the hills. From there, thousands of students, tens of thousands of refugees driven from scorched villages, and nearly 300 monks escaping persecution in Rangoon and Mandalay continue on to makeshift camps and settlements on both sides of the Thai border.



Manerplaw, Burma. At the gate of the All Burma Young Monks Union Monastery

While our delegation was in Manerplaw we could hear the sound of mortars and artillery across the ridge on Sleeping Dog Hill. Today the Burmese army is firing directly into the town, backed up by jet fighters and advanced weapons purchased from China with money from the heroin trade. Many of the friends we made and people we met have moved up to the front line. Some of them will not return from there.

We were deeply moved by the monks' practice. They teach school, provide medical support, and most importantly, keep the flame of dhamma burning brightly for refugees, dissidents, and all beings. They also model the unity of diverse ethnic groups that will be necessary for the future well-being of democracy in Burma.

Next issue of *Turning Wheel* will feature a fuller report on the delegation. But a request and a question come to mind. We feel a strong connection to the young monks. BPF is committed to helping them find means to communicate more easily among their scattered groups and to continue the work of relief and education. We welcome any contribution you might make for supplies and communications equipment (please earmark donations "Burma").

My question is more complex, and I invite your thoughts in response. While we have received Buddha's vows not to take life, and follow a deep teaching of nonviolence and reconciliation, I find it difficult to criticize armed resistance to a scorched earth policy and systematic death. It's hard to know how to support this resistance without supporting violence — or, in a larger sense, how to support *all* sides to reach peace. How might this be possible in Burma?

The next *Turning Wheel* will include more details about the INEB conference itself. Board members Donald Rothberg, Michele Bohana and I attended, along with about a hundred other new and old friends. For about ten days — at INEB's rural ashram outside Bangkok and at the forest monastery of Wat Umong near Chiang Mai — teachers, monks, and Buddhist activists formed a wonderful community of opportunity to learn about each other. Barriers of language, culture, gender, and history had to be crossed as we came to trust each other and find our common work.

The INEB conference and our delegation to Burma have changed me in ways that are still unfolding. I look forward to saying more about this in the coming months. Despite the terrible suffering in Burma, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, the Chittagong Hill Tracts, and many points on the compass, as we continue to work with INEB and others, we have a vision of harmony and interdependence that can keep us engaged for many years to come. ❖

—Alan Senauke

BPF Chapter News

Los Angeles Chapter/Ordinary Dharma

Our biweekly BPF gatherings continue with potluck breakfast at Ordinary Dharma. These meetings serve to encourage us in the projects we're involved in individually and in conjunction with other groups.

We will have a two-day Despair & Empowerment workshop in May with Joanna Macy, followed by a daylong training for those interested in facilitating this work. There will also be a seven-day Vipassana and deep ecology retreat in May. —*Christopher Reed*

Mendocino County Chapter

Since late spring of 1991, our BPF chapter has focused on the topic of "Displaced Persons." We said, "Let's do an experiment. Let's stick to something we can explore that is clearly relevant as a local issue and a global issue. Let's follow it, keep looking deeper, develop our awareness, and then let's see if action arises." This is a radical notion. This is a difficult experiment.
—*Joan Ward*

Portland, Oregon Chapter

We sponsored our first afternoon of mindfulness in December, with a focus on creating balance during the holiday season. This event included silent sitting, walking, and metta meditation, as well as personal sharing.

In late March we will offer "Spiritual Nourishment for Political Activists: An afternoon of mindfulness focusing on compassion." —*Lily Roselyn*

Oahu Chapter

Our monthly chapter meetings have been cozy lately, with a small group of regulars and the occasional newcomer. Members are involved in a gamut of issues, such as publishing essays on engaged Buddhism, writing letters in support of conscientious objectors to the Gulf War, and teaching a natural science course with a distinctly Buddhist/deep ecology subtheme.
—*Doug Codiga*

Yellow Springs Chapter

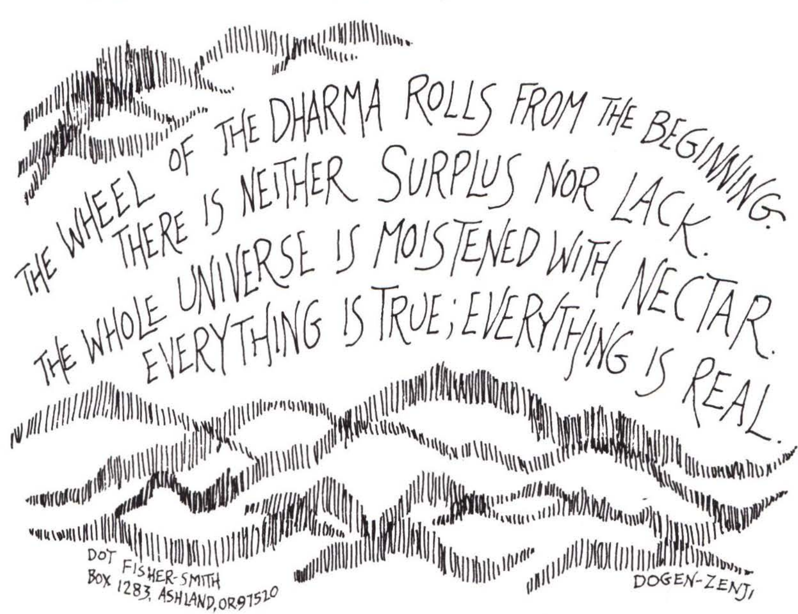
Yellow Springs BPF is sponsoring a Vipassana meditation retreat led by Norman Feldman from June 5-12. You can also sit just the weekend of June 5-7. For registration, call or write Marcie Rogers, 642 Omar Circle, Yellow Springs, OH 45387, tel.513/767-7983.

East Bay Chapter

The Chapter continues its variety of projects. March 3, we held a Women's Group sitting and discussion. March 4, BPF co-sponsored an interdenominational nonviolent action at the Concord Naval Weapons Base, drawing attention to arms being shipped to Central America and the Middle East. Members staffed tables at a national Tibet conference and the local Tibet Day on March 7 and 8. Regular activities: letter writing, precept reading, days of mindfulness, sanctuary work and more.

Seattle Chapter

A regional BPF meeting on Sunday, January 26 drew eleven members, mostly from the Seattle area. After meditation and reading of the precepts, we discussed the difficulty and interpenetration of everyday life, practice, and social action. The kindness and carefulness we brought to these exchanges created, by the end of our four hours together, a sense of deep meeting and friendliness. A potluck lunch, closing ceremony, and songs ended a valuable day. ◆



Dot Fisher-Smith, from a postcard series (Box 1283, Ashland, OR,97520)

FWBO (continued from page 31)

BPF: Do people in FWBO communities live in "voluntary poverty"?

M: In the early days, there was a lot of voluntary poverty. But we developed a kind of poverty mentality, always the feeling that you don't have anything. The principle we try to work with now is that you give what you can, and take what you need.

BPF: Do people draw an individual income, or are resources shared?

M: That varies. For instance, people who work in this gift import business get their food and lodging taken care of. If they don't live in one of the communities, the business finds them a place to live. They get food, clothing, and a weekly allowance of $50. They also receive six weeks paid vacation a year.

BPF: We've talked about the positive aspects of the FWBO. What about the things that don't work so well?

M: The idea of a community like this is so you can work on your spiritual development, and that means working on relationships with other people — *particularly* difficult relationships. And there are nearly always difficult relationships in communities. The community I live in now is very harmonious, but our problem is that we live in a dharma center, which is hosting all sorts of activities. So we never have much time to come together as a community. There are always other people there. So we may either build ourselves a separate building to live in, or we might consider moving away from the center.

Health clinic for women and children, India

BPF: Do you have an organized way to deal with conflict?

M: We try to catch conflicts before they get too bad. We have a weekly community meeting where we have what we call "reporting in." We go round the circle, and if anyone has any issues with anyone, they state it then. If there's an intense disagreement between two people, well, it just has to be sorted out. You can't just let it go, or the community could be destroyed. We may use a mediator — who is usually a mutual friend, not a professional — somebody who is trusted by both people, and who is really interested in bringing them together.

BPF: What has it been like for you personally living in these communities?

M: When I started to become involved in the FWBO, I was married and living relatively happily with my wife. No real complaints, but we decided we wanted a broader range of experience. We didn't want to just sink into a nuclear family. So we moved into a community that was based on R.D. Laing's ideas — he was a Buddhist psychotherapist. It was a madhouse. Three months of that was enough to cause us to move out. So we moved into separate communities, and that was the end of our marriage, though we're still very good friends. I moved into a mixed community, which was also pretty chaotic. That community only lasted three months. Then I lived alone for three years, in the country. It was a very happy period of my life — but though I was happy, I wasn't *satisfied.* I discovered I really wanted to be doing things with other people; I realized that is an essential part of the spiritual life. You can be in bliss by yourself, but it's not complete. It was a real *koan:* On the one hand, I knew I wanted to work with people, and on the other, I found people completely unbearable. I realized I had to find people I really did connect with, and work on those relationships. So I wrote up a list of a half dozen people, who were all in the FWBO. For a while, I sort of hovered on the edges of the communities where these people lived — sometimes living in the community, sometimes alone. Finally, five or six of us set up a new community. It was fairly loose, but we did meditate and eat together. It was quite friendly. Then I came to the States in 1980 with two other Order members to set up the FWBO here. For about the past two or three years, it's gotten to be the kind of community I really want. But it took me ten years to get here.

BPF: And what does that look like?

M: It means living with people who have the same spiritual goals as myself, on a deep level. It's commitment to the Three Jewels, to Buddhism. We're all definitely Buddhists, at the very deepest level. We all realize the value of meditation, we all study the dharma. When push comes to shove, we know we're doing the same thing. I trust them very, very deeply. It takes time to find people like that. And I think that's what's really satisfying — having that kind of trust. There's nothing I wouldn't talk to them about. ❖

For more information about the FWBO, contact: Aryaloka Buddhist Center, Heartwood Circle, Newmarket, NH 03857. Tel. 603/659-5456.

Announcements & Classifieds

Announcements

GAY/LESBIAN/BISEXUAL BUDDHISTS will be the focus of an upcoming issue of *Turning Wheel.* Tell us what it's like to be queer (see page 4) in your sangha, whether in or out of the closet. How is sexual orientation important in your encounter with the dharma? (How is it unimportant?) Tell us your stories, and help give voice to the not-so-straight Buddhist community. Send articles, letters, poems, artwork by Aug. 17 to: *Turning Wheel,* P.O. Box 4650, Berkeley, CA 94704.

BUDDHA DAY will be celebrated by the Buddhist Council of Northern California this year on Sunday May 3 at Stanford University in Annenberg Auditorium from 2 - 4 PM. Dr. Huston Smith will be the guest speaker. Buddha Day (Vesak) is a non-sectarian event. This celebration is sponsored by over 20 different Buddhist organizations. (The auditorium is in the Dept. of Art Building, just west of Hoover Tower.) For more info call 510/849-2383.

HELP REBUILD A PRIMARY SCHOOL IN CAMBODIA. The Khmer Buddhist Educational Assistance Project is seeking $9000 to assist the villagers of Trapeang Ang in Prey Krabas district, Takeo province, to rebuild one of their two primary schools. Funds are also needed to provide medical care for the monk Ven. Chea Chap who sought KEAP's assistance with this project; the Venerable is going blind. Please send donations in any currency to: KEAP, P.O. Box 45, Aranyaprathet, Prachinburi 25120, Thailand; fax 037.231.440.

HELP BUILD BUDDHIST LIBRARY IN LADAKH. The Mahabodhi Society of Bangalore, India is undertaking the construction of Ladakh's first Buddhist library. The project has been boosted by a gift of one million baht from Thai Royal Princess Galayani Watthana. Deductions are tax-deductible and may be made to the Thai-American Project, 1440 Harvard St., Santa Monica, CA 90404. Funds will be routed through Princess Galyani to the building project.

CALL FOR ENTRIES for an anthology about the death of a sister or brother. Stories, diary excerpts, interviews, poetry and artwork will be included. For further information or to send material, contact Maura Williams at Matsara Books, 421 48th St., Oakland, CA 94609, tel. 510/652-5213.

HOMELESS WOMEN and children find a refuge in the Women's Daytime Drop-In Center in Berkeley, which provides assistance, resources, and breakfast/lunch. Now the center needs more volunteers as well as donations of such items as blankets, towels, sheets, and clothing. For more information call Thelma Bryant at 510/524-2468.

ESSENTIAL LIVING is a new newsletter bringing a Buddhist perspective to environmental issues. The focus is the daily practice of simple, mindful living, and the journal is addressed to a diverse audience. For a free sample copy, write: Maia Institute, R.R. 1, Box 1310, Moretown, VT 05660.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S CONTEST: Apple Alley Press seeks contributions on the theme "Compassionate Understanding" in the form of original writings, songs, black & white drawings or black & white photographs. Open to youth internationally, ages 5-18. All work must be 100% original by youth. Awards up to $100; best work will be published. Submit work to Apple Alley Press, 1009 Terry St., Longmont, CO 80501 USA, and include a self-addressed stamped envelope.

Coming Events

TSULTRIM ALLIONE leads Mandala of the Five Dakinis: Working with Emotions, July 17 - August 2, Tuscany, Italy. For information, contact Carol Urban P.O. Box 275, Boiceville, NY 12412, tel. 914/688-2169.

RETREAT WITH THICH NHAT HANH IN FRANCE: "Vipassana in the Mahayana Tradition," a 21-day retreat & seminar at Plum Village, France, June 6-28, 1992. English will be the primary language of the the retreat. Cost from $800 to $1050 depending on housing. Those enrolled must participate in the whole retreat. For application or more information, contact: Community of Mindful Living, P.O. Box 7355, Berkeley, CA 94707, 510/527-3751; or the Église Bouddhique Unifiée, Plum Village, Meyrac, 47120 Loubès-Bernac, France; tel. 53/58.48.58.

F.O.R. NAT'L CONFERENCE. July 15-19, 1992, at Snow Mt. Ranch, Colorado, with theme "Building Community, Breaking Free." Speakers include North and South American Indian representatives and many others. For more information, contact: FOR Nat'l Conference, Box 271, Nyack, NY 10960. 914/358-4601.

Classifieds

UNEMPLOYED BUDDHISTS living in Guelph area interested in developing alternative right livelihood business. Please contact Annabel Cathrall, 551 Kortright Rd. W., Guelph, Ontario N1G 3J6, Canada.

NURSERY TRAINEE POSITION: Small organic nursery producing horticultural plants for the Rocky Mountain high plains. $400/month stipend for nine months, shared housing in large farmhouse on outskirts of Boulder, CO. Beautiful, contemplative site; practice environment. Please write immediately to: Bob Howard, Hedgerow Farms, 8328 Valmont, Boulder, CO 80301.

MINI-COMMUNITY: Sandy Berrigan seeks two peace-oriented housemates to be part of a mini-community in her country home in Albion, CA. Gardeners (or potential ones), vegetarians, nonsmokers, music lovers, and, most essentially, people who can live simply are sought. Reasonable rent, quite location. Available about July 1, 1992. For more information call 707/937-0313 or write P.O. Box 607, Albion, CA 95410.

FOR SALE FROM BPF:

❂ Thich Nhat Hanh letterpress broadside, beautifully designed, 6 1/2" x 12"; text taken from *Peace Is*

Every Step. Suitable for framing — these are wonderful gifts. $3 for first one; $1 for each additional.

❍ T-shirts with BPF logo in blue or white: $12. Specify S, M, L, or XL (Supply variable).

❍ BPF buttons, with BPF logo: $1.

❍ Thich Nhat Hanh tapes: "The Practice of Peace" talk in Berkeley, April 1991. Two-tape set $14.

❍ Sulak Sivaraksa talk: "Buddhism with a small 'b,'" Spring 1992. $14.

❍ Tapes from the 1991 BPF Institute for the Practice of Engaged Buddhism: $90 for complete set. $12 for individual tapes: contact BPF office for order form. (Postage included in all prices.)

GRATITUDE

The Buddhist Peace Fellowship Board gratefully acknowledges generous contributions above and beyond membership between December 16, 1991 and the end of March, 1992:

Laurel Adler ❖ Linda Allen ❖ Patricia Von Alten ❖ Abigail Van Alyn ❖ Bill & Diane Ames ❖ Gordon Andrews ❖ Sara Armstrong ❖ William Atwood ❖ John P. Azelvandre ❖ James Babson ❖ Joseph Bailey ❖ Christopher Bandini ❖ Jane Baraz ❖ Hathaway Barry ❖ Don Harris & Valerie Bartholomew ❖ Philip Benezra ❖ Berkeley Zen Center ❖ Stephen Beven ❖ Jennifer Biehn ❖ Alfred Bloom ❖ Lawrence Bloomfield ❖ Annabel Boissevain ❖ Valerie Brown ❖ Paul Bruner ❖ David Brus ❖ Gregory Bruss ❖ Valerie Butler ❖ Robin Butler ❖ William Calkins ❖ David Mark & Linda Campbell ❖ Paul & Tamara Carignan ❖ Joan Casey ❖ Robert Chinery ❖ Sally Clay ❖ Susan Clements ❖ Jane Ellen Combelic ❖ Linda Conner ❖ Martin Conner ❖ Doug Robnett & Sarah Conover ❖ Andrew Cooper ❖ Joe Cummings ❖ Jim Davis ❖ Lisa Davison ❖ Charles Day ❖ Ken & Nadine Delano ❖ Helen Demechiel ❖ Donna Denman ❖ James Derbin ❖ Dharma Gaia, Italy ❖ Dharma Rain Zen Center ❖ Diane Renshaw & Flip Dibner ❖ Arlene Dorius ❖ Curt Dornberg ❖ Alan Dower ❖ Paul Dubin ❖ Allan Durrant ❖ Pamela Eaken ❖ Dennis Edds ❖ Walter Edge ❖ John Fahlstrom ❖ Robert Fearman ❖ Kathey Ferland ❖ Lyn Fine ❖ Norman & Kathy Fischer ❖ David Foecke ❖ Patricia Franz ❖ David Freese ❖ Jan Freier ❖ Lenore Friedman ❖ Athol Fugard ❖ Katherine Garnett ❖ Barbara Gates ❖ Stephen Gockley ❖ J. Goddard ❖ Daniel Goleman ❖ Kelly Gormley ❖ Ruby Udell Grad ❖ Cheryl Greene ❖ Ann Greenwater ❖ Peter Gregory ❖ Gary Grimm ❖ Jane Grissmer ❖ Orlando Gustilo ❖ Mark Haddad ❖ Stewart Haight ❖ James Hake ❖ Robert Halcomb ❖ Linda Haller ❖ Mark Harris ❖ Frances Harwood ❖ Alice Hayes ❖ Shirley Helm ❖ Brett Henbest ❖ Ed Henry ❖ Nicholas Herzmark ❖ Lynne Hofman ❖ Mary Holte ❖ Derek Van Hoorn ❖ Leland Hoover ❖ Leland Hoover ❖ Judith Howard ❖ Tom Howlett ❖ Jamie & Maki Hubbard ❖ Susan Hulse ❖ Piet Hut ❖ Frances Hutchins ❖ Stephen Hyde ❖ Leavenworth Jackson ❖ Yorke Jacobsen ❖ Gary Janka ❖ James Jerrell ❖ Jivananada Bhikkhu ❖ Brad Johnson ❖ Cynthia Jurs ❖ Max Kalin ❖ Donald Kelly ❖ Irene Kende ❖ David Kenigsberg ❖ Michael Keown ❖ Sheridan Adams & Jeff Kitzes ❖ Ken Kraft ❖ Bruce Krawisz ❖ Michael Kremer ❖ Cathy La Forte ❖ David Laser ❖ Eric Lehrman ❖ Lee Klinger Lesser ❖ Tom Light ❖ Walt Lyons ❖ Barry Magid ❖ Joe Maizlish ❖ Thomas Marcey ❖ Konrad Marchant ❖ Scottie Mart ❖ Sharon Masterson ❖ Maria Mather ❖ Beth Maurer ❖ William Maxey ❖ Lana McCalley ❖ Barbara McEntee ❖ Patrick McMahon ❖ Robert McNally ❖ Mary Jo Meadow ❖ Gretchen Mellberg ❖ Leroy Milman ❖ Nora Minogue ❖ Tom Misciagna ❖ Anu de Monterice ❖ Dan Morris ❖ Linda Morse ❖ Jean Eileen Mukanna ❖ Susan Musicant ❖ Sally Nelson ❖ Donna Neumann ❖ Thanh Nguyen ❖ Jolie Oderschall ❖ Mary Orr ❖ Peter Ott ❖ Mary Owen ❖ Andre Papantonio ❖ Gerald Pelletier ❖ Steve Peskind ❖ Gizella Pierandozzi ❖ Myfanwy Plank ❖ David Preston ❖ Marnie Purple ❖ Ralph Quillman ❖ Willa Rabinovitch ❖ Margaret Rader ❖ Iain Ramage ❖ Mitch Ratner ❖ Ronald Rattner ❖ Christopher Reed ❖ Annie & Victor Reinhardt ❖ Jean Reyes ❖ Bob Reynolds ❖ Celeste Rice ❖ David Sanford ❖ Rondi Saslow ❖ Diane Schade ❖ Richard Schmidt ❖ Kathy Schwerin ❖ Mary Ann Park & Seth Seely ❖ Tiffany Severns ❖ Julie Sgarzi ❖ Bennett Shapiro ❖ Deb Shaw ❖ Sunny Shine ❖ John Sillers ❖ Christine Skarda ❖ Stephen Slusher ❖ Pamela Small ❖ Robert Smith ❖ Cynthia Smith ❖ Joe & Susan Smith ❖ Kenneth Smith-Shuman ❖ Michael Soule ❖ Richard Stafford ❖ Johanna Stephenson ❖ Joan Stigliani ❖ M. Stone ❖ Meredith Stout ❖ Judith Stronach ❖ Anne Strong ❖ Alec Style ❖ Rhondalynn Summers ❖ Linda Switzer ❖ Michael Swords ❖ Ed Van Tassel ❖ Yvonne Taylor ❖ Nancy Taylor ❖ Melanie Terbouic ❖ Lin & Ray Tetrault ❖ Fay Thiry ❖ Nancy Tierney ❖ Al & Fran Tribe ❖ Sakaye Tsuji ❖ Peter Turner ❖ Fredrich Ulrich ❖ Taitetsu Unno ❖ Thomas Vaughan ❖ Louis Vega ❖ Keith Voos ❖ Thein Wah ❖ Patricia Ward ❖ Joan Ward ❖ Dennis Warren ❖ Jill Washburn ❖ Carol Watts ❖ Richard Wehrman ❖ Noni Welch ❖ Jean Westcott ❖ Judith White ❖ Norman Wilkinson ❖ Jody Wilson ❖ Laurel Withrow ❖ Anne Yeomans ❖ Bruce Von Zellen ❖ Elizabeth Zenger ❖ Michael & Linda Zillinger ❖ Pamela Zwehl-Burke ❖

For donations above and beyond the call of fundraising:

Karen Anderson ❖ Anonymous ❖ Stephen Canner ❖ Ridhard & Laura Chasin ❖ S. Dhammika ❖ Anne Dorsey ❖ Richard Fireman ❖ Anita Wah & Alan Fishman ❖ Alice Hayes ❖ Dr. & Mrs. Thanh Huynh ❖ Terry Kinzel ❖ Bruce Krawisz ❖ David Loy ❖ Bettina Lum ❖ Joanna Macy ❖ Rose & Rafe Martin ❖ Rebecca Mayeno ❖ Hope Millholland ❖ Anne Mize ❖ Pat O'Hara ❖ Don Pretari ❖ Conway Rees ❖ Grace Spring Reinstein ❖ Emil & Jason Seaman ❖ Bob & Kate Shea ❖ Charles Stern ❖ Ven. Samu Sunim ❖ Vanguard Foundation ❖ Robert Wilber ❖ Deborah & Allan Wilkinson ❖ Lillian Wood ❖ Denoya Wyatt ❖ Phillip Ziegler ❖

❖ Thank you! ❖

BPF Chapters & Affiliates

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

Chapters

Boulder/Denver BPF
Sheryl Stalcup
10050 West 13th Avenue
Lakewood, CO 80215
303/238-3376

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
213/396-5054

Marin County BPF
Wendy Johnson
Green Gulch Farm
Sausalito, CA 94965
415/383-3709

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
206/758-2824

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

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

Portland, Oregon BPF
Kathy Whitwen
P.O. Box 14241
Portland, OR 97214
503/288-3641

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

Rochester BPF
Bill Anderson
P.O. Box 10605
Rochester, NY 14610
716/442-8803

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

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

Seattle BPF
Susan Baldwin
2223 NE 137th St.
Seattle, WA 98125
206/367-7377

Sonoma County BPF
Mary Porter-Chase
Box 892
Cotati, CA 94928
707/664-8598

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

Tumamoc BPF
Moss Stone
707 East 1st Street
Tucson, AZ 87519
602/622-2955

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

Washington, D.C. BPF
Gregg Krech
1908 South Randolph Street
Arlington, VA 22204
703/892- 4174

Yellow Springs BPF
Ken Simon
241 Xenia Ave.
Yellow Springs, OH 45387
513/767-7602

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

Int'l Network of Engaged Buddhists
303/7 Soi Santipap, Nares Road
Bangkok, 10500, Siam

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

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

BPF National Board

Michele Bohana, Washington, DC
Doug Codiga, Honolulu, HI
Nanda Currant, Soquel, CA
Linda Cutts, San Francisco, CA
Margaret Howe, Carrboro, NC
Sandy Hunter, Berkeley, CA
Stephanie Kaza, Burlington, VT
Albert Kutchins, Berkeley, CA
George Lane, Mill Valley, CA
Fran Levin, Nyack, NY
Donald Rothberg, Berkeley, CA
Jeff Scannell, Freestone, CA
Ken Tanaka, Berkeley, CA
Susan Tieger, Oakland, CA
Gordon Tyndall, Oakland, 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, above. BPF relies on members' support and suggests a minimum annual donation of $25 for U.S. residents, $30 elsewhere. Please make checks payable to "Buddhist Peace Fellowship." Contributions are tax deductible.

Members receive a one-year subscription (four issues) to *Turning Wheel*, the BPF Journal. For contributions of $60 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.

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

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

Address Correction Requested