



TURNING WHEEL

Journal of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship

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BUDDHIST PEACE FELLOWSHIP
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IN PRAISE *of* WATER



Helena Norberg-Hodge on Globalization



FROM THE EDITOR

Not Taking Water for Granted

Sometimes I take for granted the very things I need most, like water. But it would only take three days for me to die of thirst.

So far today here's what water and I have done together: brushed these teeth, washed this face, made tea, washed dishes. Probably most of you reading *TW* get water by turning on a tap. But over a billion people in the world don't get it that way. If they get it at all, they carry it. Chop wood, carry water.

I read about how women in the western U.S. did laundry before electricity brought water into their homes (*The Next Greatest Thing*, from the Rural Electrification Cooperative Assn.). It was exceedingly hard work, building woodfires under cauldrons of water. One woman said, "Yes, we had running water—I grabbed those two buckets up and ran the two hundred yards to the house with them."

Water is heavy. It bows the shoulders of the women who carry it, for it's usually women. If "a pint's a pound the world around," then a gallon weighs eight pounds. A four-gallon water bucket weighs 32 pounds. That's getting heavy, especially if you have one bucket in each hand. Plus all the water you carry inside of you, the weight of your wet meat.

So, not wanting to take my water for granted, I called the East Bay Municipal Utility District, the people who send me my water bill. A nice man told me the water that flows out of my tap in Berkeley comes from the Mokelumne River in the Sierras. "How does it get from there to here?" I asked. "Do you carry it in four-gallon pails?" No—the river is dammed in the Sierra foothills, in the Camanche and Pardee Reservoirs. From there it travels in pipes 87 inches in diameter across the Central Valley to the San Pablo Dam Reservoir, not far from here, and a treatment plant, where it is filtered and chlorinated, and then through smaller and smaller pipes under the streets, by gravity, into my sink.

And when water leaves me, it goes down the drain with my toothpaste, into the sewer system, to a sewage treatment plant in Oakland, and from there into San Francisco Bay. To the ocean, up to the clouds, down again as rain, around and around. As Fran Peavey points out (page 18), the planet has always been washed in the same water, the same number of gallons. It just gets stored in different forms in different places, but it's *the same water*. The water that deposited Noah's ark on Ararat might be the same water that licked over the banks of the Licking River to cause 11 flooding deaths in Kentucky, according to this morning's paper. We think we can *control* water (unless we're sailors or surfers), but we can't.

And we like to think we *own* water. But water doesn't know we are buying it and selling it. It just keeps going around. It just keeps looking for the lowest place. Water doesn't know we are stealing it from each other.

There are many American Indian tribes whose water has been taken from them—the Jila River Indian Community in Arizona, for example. Dams were built upstream on the Jila and Salt Rivers, in order to deliver water to non-Indian populations, and now these rivers no longer run on the reservation. The Indians' claim is tied up in court, as are the water rights of many other tribes. Even with a favorable court decision, there still needs to be a way to deliver the water, and this means taking it away from somebody else. Paper water isn't very wet.

Dogen wrote, "Dragons see palaces in the water." In the streambed the light bends and ripples, and the crayfish wave their feelers. In the bathtub, small children sing to themselves and pour water from one cup to another, while their fingers pucker and their imaginations are released. And I drink the Mokelumne River from a glass—it passes through my body, joining me to the water cycle.

A friend who sells composting toilets tells me, "The day will come when people won't believe that we once flushed perfectly good drinking water down the toilet." ❖ —Susan Moon



TURNING WHEEL

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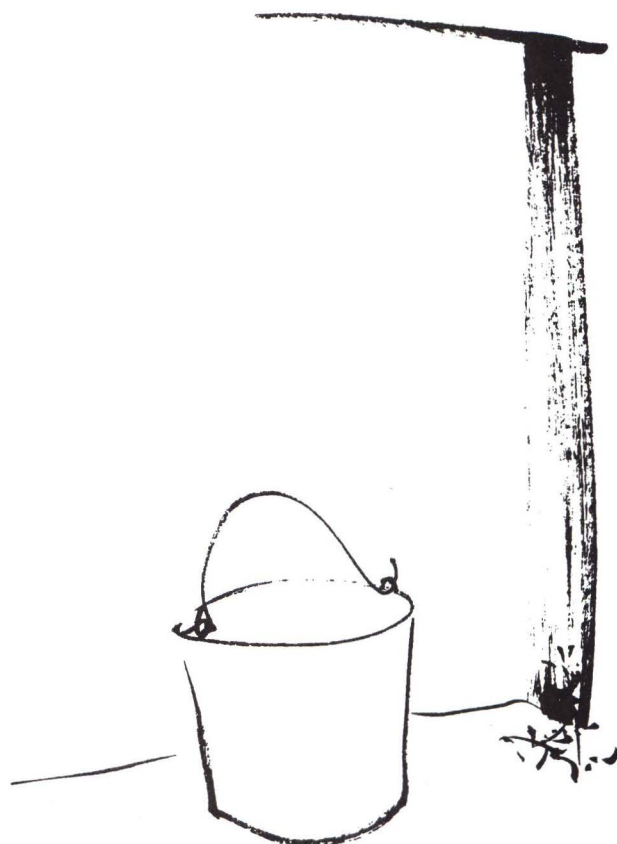
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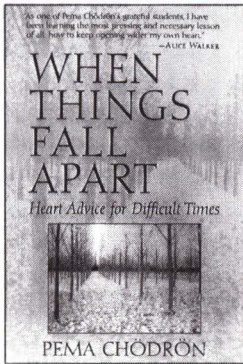
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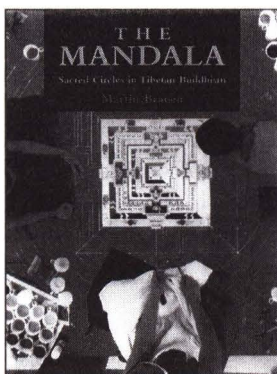
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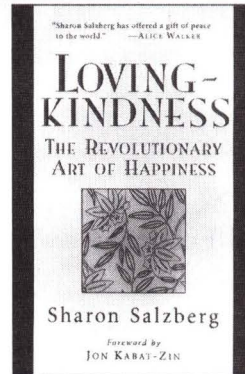
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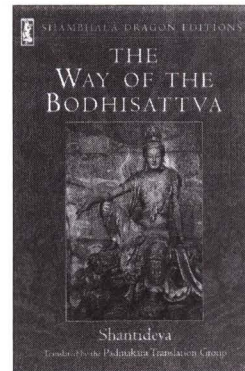
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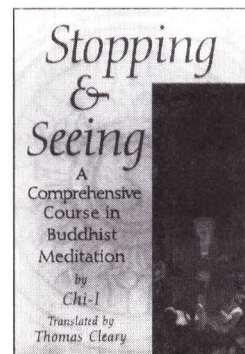
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LETTERS

When the Personal isn't Political Enough

Alan asked in the last issue of *TW* for feedback on BPF's visioning process, and I would like to make a plea for a sharper edge to the BPF and to the *Turning Wheel*. I continue to see the mission of BPF to be as radical as possible: to push people to look deeply into Buddhism and their practice and to see the liberation of the world there. BPF can be the center of the conversation and work of creating a liberation Buddhism, much as a segment of Catholics have created a social-justice reading of their scriptures. *TW* could be the platform for this movement, an avenue for exploring Buddhist social analysis, and a dialog for people's experiments in applying the dharma to the turbulence of the arena of planetary change.

I think we need to keep focused on how BPF is different from the practice centers of Buddhism. If we thought that the way to transform the world was only through individual sitting practice, then there would be no need for BPF. But I think BPF was founded on the belief that the Buddhist principles of non-harming, non-duality, wisdom and compassion had something to add to the the work of bringing about a peaceful world.

I long for more big-picture articles in *TW*, and less personal reflection and stories. More relevant to BPF's mission in my view is to have more Buddhist analysis, more assistance in applying Buddhist principles to active nonviolence, more help in bringing a Buddhist perspective to contemporary peace and social action movements, more examples of Buddhists out there working for peace and justice (how they are doing it, what they are bumping up against, why they think that what they are doing comes from their beliefs and practice).

"Making clear the Buddha's way of peace" is a call not just to inner peace but to outer as well, and through active means. I support the organization's and this magazine's attempts to nurture this vision and to bring it into fruition.

Margaret Howe, Dunn, North Carolina

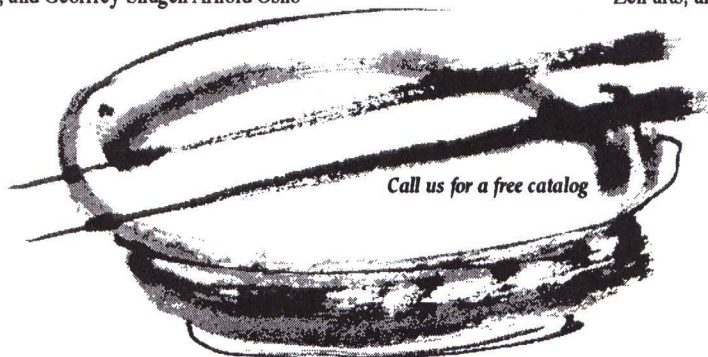
Haiti, Burma, and Disney

My friend Charlie Hinton takes me to task on several counts in his letter in the last issue of *Turning Wheel*. He claims that I am mistaken about what the Haitians want Disney to do about working conditions in Haiti. In support of his position he cites a letter prepared by the National Labor Committee. I, however, was not referring to what the union-financed NLC has to say about the issue. I was referring to remarks made by

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Haitians at a public meeting sponsored by BPF. As to “what the workers want,” I suspect that Charlie is right; I have no quarrel with his four points.

Charlie and I have long disagreed about the World Bank and the IMF. Clearly these institutions have made some mistakes—some very bad ones—but, in my view, they have also done much good, and so has the privatization which they have required in many of the developing countries as a condition for loans or other assistance. Charlie tends to demonize privatization and alleges that, in Haiti, the state-owned enterprises are a source of government revenue. He may be right, but I’m frankly very skeptical. In the countries about which I have some knowledge—Britain and France among the developed countries, China and India among the less-developed ones—state-owned enterprises have been a terrible burden on public resources rather than sources of revenue to the government. Resources which could have been used to improve education or for family planning or to protect the environment are siphoned off to cover the enormous losses of the state-owned enterprises. After privatization, many of these enterprises became profitable and contributed to government revenues through the payment of corporate income taxes; British Airways and British Steel are good examples.

Charlie claims that my arguments reflect a failure to understand “how dire the current economic conditions are for Haitians.” I think that I do understand this; I just happen to disagree with some of the solutions recommended by the NLC—solutions which in my opinion would almost certainly make things worse for the Haitians, not better.

—Gordon Tyndall, Oakland, California

It appears the campaign to get Disney out of Burma is making a difference. Due to public outcry, Disney now claims to be out of Burma. While there is no independent confirmation of this claim, the National Labor Committee, the conveners of the Disney campaign, has accepted Disney’s claim.

However, work and pay conditions of Disney contractors in all countries, including the U.S., continue to be appalling, so keep the cards and letters coming. To protest Disney’s use of sweatshop labor, write Michael Eisner, CEO, Walt Disney Company, 500 South Buena Vista St., Burbank, CA 91521.

I appreciated Norman Fischer’s article, “On Zen Work,” and Marcia Reeser’s “Children Without Childhoods.” Norman describes an ideal, which I appreciate as a craftsperson and worker at a worker-owned printing company, but Marcia better describes the reality that confronts the majority of the world’s people.

Norman writes of the tragedy of managers developing the idea that physical work is beneath them, but that idea is integral to the class structure of capitalism. It separates work from leisure, and rewards intellectual

work over physical work. In this structure, the ultimate goal is not to have to work at all.

Marcia writes about ending child labor by putting children in school, but internationally the structural adjustment programs mandated by the World Bank and the IMF are destroying free public education, the agricultural sector, and most forms of public employment. Sweatshops, migrant farm labor, street vending, drug pushing, and the sex trade have become the main options for millions of people in the global economy.

This degradation of work is not an accident. It is the consequence of political and business policies promulgated for the benefit of a tiny elite. As engaged Buddhists, our understanding of non-duality and the dignity of work give us a unique perspective from which to address these devastating policies, in an effort to make the ideal expressed by Norman the reality.

—Charlie Hinton, San Francisco, California

Tibetan Refugees and the Poultry Business

In 1992, BPF's Tibetan Refugee Revolving Fund made a loan to a Tibetan Refugee settlement in India to enable them to purchase corn-grinding equipment for their poultry-raising operation. Later the Tibetan Secretary informed us that the project had been terminated and that the equipment would be sold and the

loan repaid.

When we inquired why the project had been terminated, we were informed that it was decided that the operation was "too sinful." In response to our inquiry into the termination of the operation and the nature of the sin of raising poultry, we received a reply from the Executive Secretary, Tsering Wangyal.

From the Secretary's letter we learned that during a visit to the settlement, H.H. the Dalai Lama made a brief stop at a fish pond where small fish were allowed to grow up without being caught and eaten. His Holiness thought that it was a good idea to leave the fish alone, feeding them rather than catching them. However, His Holiness thought it was not fair that the birds in the poultry area were kept in very small cages without any freedom of movement. His Holiness further suggested that instead of culling the birds due to unproductivity, they be allowed to move freely in a larger space.

It was clear that the project would prove unviable if the birds were set free rather than sold to the market for consumption. The board of directors of the cooperative society, therefore, decided to close down the poultry farm. This is exactly what has happened to the poultry farm and I thought that *Turning Wheel* readers might appreciate hearing about this case of practical Buddhist business ethics.

—Margo Tyndall, Oakland, California ❖

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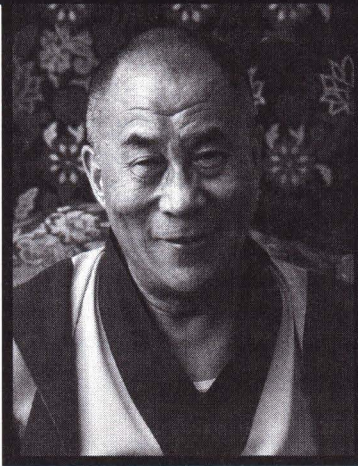
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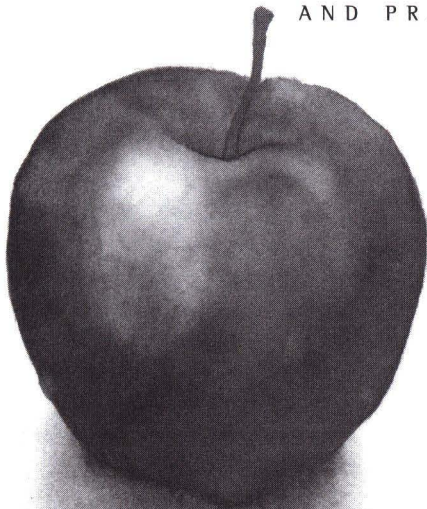
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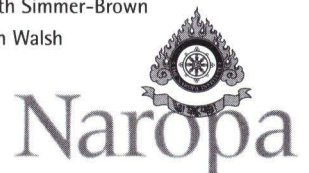


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READINGS

Batman Fights Landmines

More than 100 million landmines are planted in a third of the world's countries. They do not discriminate between soldiers and civilians, nor do they self-destruct when the conflict has ended. Landmines prevent refugees from returning home. Because of landmines, land cannot be cultivated to grow food, and people live in fear that they will be killed or maimed if they walk in the fields. A mine costs as little as 50 cents to put in place and as much as \$1000 to remove. The cost in human life and suffering is immeasurable.

The International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) is a global effort by over 750 groups in 45 countries to bring an end to this scourge. ICBL was recently nominated by U.S. Congressman James McGovern (D-Mass.) for the Nobel Peace Prize. Canada has offered to host an ICBL conference in December, 1997 for the signing of an international treaty calling for a total ban on landmines.

The U.S. Campaign to Ban Landmines, a coalition of over 175 American organizations, has been urging the Clinton Administration to sign the international treaty at the end of this year. Two positive changes are that the U.S. moratorium on mine exports has now become a permanent ban; and in the U.N., a resolution initiated by the U.S. urging states to pursue an agreement to ban landmines was passed 155-0, with 10 abstentions.

While Clinton claims leadership at the United Nations for this resolution, he has made no mention of Canada's proposal for the December conference. The U.S. Campaign to Ban Landmines, predicting that Clinton will drag his feet, has called for a Ban Landmines Now Action Day on May 16, 1997 in Washington, D.C. The date is the one-year anniversary of the President's promise to ban landmines. On that day, petitions demanding a landmines ban will be presented to the President.

Last October, DC Comics, in collaboration with the United States Department of Defense and endorsed by UNICEF (an unlikely team!) has just published a Superman comic book telling young people about the dangers of landmines in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Officially released last October, it is being distributed throughout Bosnia. Realizing this was not enough, two months later DC Comics published a special issue, *Batman: Death of the Innocents*, to raise public awareness among American young people about the death and destruction caused by landmines. Batman himself says that a total ban is the only solution. *Batman: Death of the Innocents* is available wherever comic books are sold and from the U.S. Campaign to Ban Landmines.

For more information call: 202/483-9222 or e-mail: banminesusa@vi.org

Tibet

While Clinton's actions to promote U.S.-China relations draw widespread criticism from human rights supporters, the German Parliament passed an exemplary resolution in support of human rights in Tibet, and called on China to enter into negotiations with Tibet. The German resolution recognizes the Tibetan people's right to autonomy. It expresses grave concern about the continuing detention of seven-year-old Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, the child recognized by the Dalai Lama as the reincarnation of the Panchen Lama. It denounces China's Tibet policies, including population transfer of Chinese into Tibet, forced abortion and sterilization of women, and imprisonments for political, religious, and cultural reasons, as well as the country's control by a Chinese administration. Not surprisingly, scheduled visits between Germany and China by government officials have been canceled.

The Tibetan scholar Ngawang Choephel, detained in August 1995 by Chinese authorities, has been tried and sentenced to 18 years in prison. Choephel, a member of the Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts, was a Fulbright scholar and visiting teacher of ethnomusicology at Middlebury College in Vermont in 1993. He returned to Tibet in 1995 to record traditional music and dance for a documentary film and was detained under suspicion of "gathering sensitive intelligence" and "engaging in illegal separatist activities" for the Tibetan Government-in-Exile with funding from American sources. Because Ngawang's case is the first in which someone with a non-political background is being treated as a serious political case, there is speculation that he is being used to caution Tibetans in exile not to come back to Tibet to work in cultural or humanitarian areas.

To help in the campaign to obtain Ngawang Choephel's immediate release, check the International Committee of Lawyers for Tibet (ICLT) Web Page at www.tibetictl.org, or call 510/486-0588.

Appeal for Prachak, Thai Forest Advocate

For many years Prachak Pethsingha, formerly Phra Prachak Khuttacitto, has worked to educate monks and villagers about the importance of protecting the natural environment of Thailand. Many INEB (International Network of Engaged Buddhists) members have participated in the Deep Ecology Walks he conducted in the past and learned from his deep-rooted Buddhist teachings. Prachak was one of the first monks to "ordain" trees in order to keep them from being cut down. Thai authorities, threatened by Prachak's campaigns against deforestation and logging, have pressed charges against him, and he has already had 40 court hearings. Since leaving the monkhood, he has been unable to support his family, and he needs assistance to finance his legal defense.

The International Network of Engaged Buddhists asks your support for Prachak's defense. Please send a check made out to "INEB 1" and clearly marked for Prachak Kuttacitto, to BPF, P.O. Box 4650, Berkeley, CA 94704. For further information about Prachak please contact INEB Tel./Fax: (66-2) 433-7169, e-mail: ineb@ipied.tu.ac.th.

Burma

Aung San Suu Kyi, leader of the democratic movement in Burma, was awarded her first honorary doctoral degree in the United States by American University. Suu Kyi was unable to travel abroad because of the possibility of being denied reentry to her homeland, and so her husband accepted the honorary Doctorate of Law degree on her behalf and delivered her message at the university's winter commencement ceremony. Winner of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991, Suu Kyi has been awarded degrees and other honors by universities in several countries. American University President Benjamin Ladner declared the degree was "public confirmation that you have friends and supporters... throughout the world."

Her message expressed her hope that those present "might wish to cast their eyes beyond their own frontiers towards the shadowlands of lost rights...to assist in our fight for a Burma where young people can [also] know the joys of hope and opportunity." She urged the graduates to "take a principled stand against companies which are doing business with the military regime of Burma. Please use your liberty to promote ours."

In response to her call, several communities across the nation have passed selective purchasing legislation. This means they refuse to do business with corporations who do business with Burma.

One result is that PepsiCo has severed all relationships with its former franchise bottler, effective January 15, 1997. And those who have written to Disney to protest Disney's contracts in Burma have received responses from Disney's Consumer Products Division, saying that as of December 1996, Disney has banned the use of third-party manufacturers there. The National Labor Committee, convener of the Disney campaign, has confirmed that Disney is out of Burma. ❖

IN MEMORIAM—Judi Bari, 1949-1997

Earth First! activist, eco-feminist, revolutionary

In an interview in TW, Spring 1994, Judi said,

"People tell me I'm strong to survive. I'm not weak, I'm not strong—I'm just here. What else can I do? I can't turn my back on the struggle and say, 'Okay, you bombed me, so I'm going to go away. And thank you for not putting me in jail.' I can't do that. I'm compelled to do something about it."

And she did.

Respite

by Aung San Suu Kyi

[The following is excerpted from Suu Kyi's weekly letter from Burma, published in the *Mainichi Daily News* in Japan. This piece is from Letter No. 50, November 25, 1996.]

Those who have to face persistent political persecution become highly politicized. Our lives take on a rhythm different from those who, on waking up in the morning, do not need to wonder who might have been arrested during the night. But still, our lives are not all politics, we have our personal concerns, our intellectual and cultural interests, and our spiritual aspirations. The spiritual dimension becomes particularly important in a struggle in which deeply held convictions and strength of mind are the chief weapons against armed repression.

The majority of the people of Burma are Buddhists, and it is traditional for us to gather together on religious occasions to renew our spiritual strength and our ties of friendship. The National League for Democracy, like many other organizations in the country, tries to observe major religious festivals...

Amidst the morass of political repression, intimidation, officially organized acts of anarchy, and interference in our right of worship, we gained a brief respite from worldly concerns in the celebration of *kathina*. This ceremony takes place at the end of the rainy season retreat, and lasts for one month, from the first day of the waning moon of *Thadingyut* (Oct. 28) until the full moon day of *Tazaungdine* (Nov. 25). Participation in the *kathina* ceremony, of which the major feature is the offering of new robes, relieves monks of the disciplinary rules to some extent, and therefore those donors who arrange the ceremony gain merit.

The N.L.D. made an offering of *kathina* robes at the Panditarana Monastery this year. It was good to gather to perform a common act of merit. It was good to listen to the discourse of Sayadaw U Pandita, to ponder over his words of wisdom and to reflect on the meaning of the ceremony. We Burmese believe that those who perform good deeds together will meet again through the cycle of existence, bonded by shared merit. It was good to think that if I am able to continue to tread the cycle of existence, I shall be doing so in the company of those who have proved to be the truest of friends and companions. Many of us attending the ceremony came together eight years ago to commit ourselves to the cause of democracy and human rights, and we have remained together in the face of intense adversity. There were also many missing faces, the ones who had died, the ones who were in prison. It was sad to think of them. But still, it was good to be able to take time off from the political routine, to enjoy a small, precious, spiritual respite. ❖

NAGARJUNA

The Great Theoretician of Buddhist Social Action

by Diane Patenaude Ames

This country needs a national system of subsidized health care. We must also revitalize the schools and fill in all those potholes in the roads. Humanize the prison system. End the death penalty. Enact tax relief for our poorest citizens, and provide for "the blind, the sick, the crippled, the wretched, the protectorless, and beggars."

Unfortunately, this is not the Democratic Party platform. (It is to the left of it, for one thing.) It is the political program outlined in a treatise called the *Ratnavali*, a manual of political and religious advice written for an Indian king in the second century C.E., by one of the greatest Buddhist philosophers of all time: Nagarjuna.

Considering the stupendous importance of Nagarjuna, we know remarkably little about him. All that really seems clear is that he was a Buddhist scholar-monk who lived and wrote in southern India in the second century C.E.; that he wrote some of the most important commentaries in the whole Mahayana Buddhist canon on the central Mahayana doctrine of emptiness or *shunyata*; and that his disciples, of whom he seems to have had many, included at least two kings.

And Nagarjuna was a social activist. It was not a sideline for him: he told the unidentified disciple-king to whom his *Ratnavali* was addressed that enlightened social action is an integral part of Buddhist practice. Along with injunctions to obey Buddhist precepts, practice bodhisattva virtues (the selfless bodhisattva is the Mahayana Buddhist ideal), study the Dharma, meditate, and in general pursue enlightenment, Nagarjuna urged the monarch to embrace what we would now call liberal and humane social policies.

The other ancient Indians took such ideas seriously. Fa-hsien, the Chinese pilgrim who visited the Indian peninsula in the fifth century, found that most of the

kingdoms there had actually implemented many of the measures that Nagarjuna had suggested. He had the impression that the resulting society had a lower crime rate than China, even though criminals were treated much less harshly, that people were comparatively prosperous, and that there was almost no warfare going on, thanks partly to the peaceful teachings of Buddhism.

However, Nagarjuna's justification for his advice was not practical but spiritual. He insisted that half the key to enlightenment lay in developing compassion, and that any idea of compassion that does not involve decent treatment of your fellow creatures doesn't make sense. However, he did *not* urge the king to try to develop compassion just by doing nice things. Compassion's development had to be integrated with Buddhist practice and with the development of a grasp of *shunyata*, the Buddhist concept of emptiness, which teaches that compassion toward others must be based on a realization of the voidness of the distinction between self and other. Only the understanding that we and our neighbors are not separate can enable us to do the seemingly impossible and love them as ourselves. ❖

Diane Ames has been a member of the Buddhist Churches of America, a Shin Buddhist organization, for 16 years. She edits a small Shin Buddhist newsletter called Sangha, and is an active BPF member.



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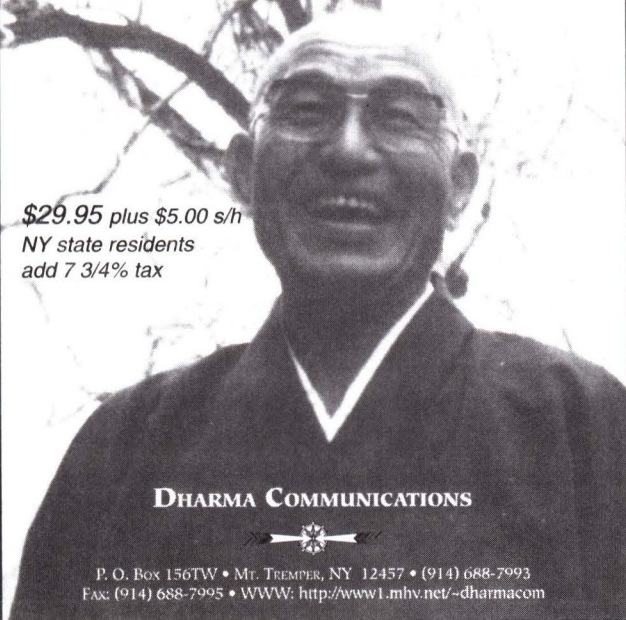


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WINTER WATER

by Stephanie Kaza

Winter sky, white trees, white everything. This morning we woke to streets covered with two inches of fresh snow. How we crowed with delight! The world made fresh again. But the pleasure was short-lived. By afternoon it was raining. I plowed through melting slush at each street corner where the snow had piled up. *Splash, splash, trudge, trudge.* Still, the balmy air was a new delight—how easy and comfortable! This didn't last either. A few hours later the front passed on and arctic air dropped in. By midnight the temperature had dropped below zero. One winter day in Vermont—not yet spring here.

The next day, the slush was frozen hard in jagged lumps and bumpy ridges. Along the sidewalks, puddles had turned to mirror-flat sheets of ice, adding to the treachery. Black ice, slick ice, snow-covered hidden ice. *Where is the delight in this?* I wondered. *Ah, yes—waking up—at least the delight of mindfulness. Practice as if your life depended on it.*

It is brisk and cold, temperatures in the single digits, as they say. I check the newspaper weather map; the phrase for New England today is “brutally cold.” We go out anyway to see what we can see—carefully, one step at a time.

Down by the lake edge the wind is fierce, biting through our pants, burning our faces. The water is freezing—literally! We can almost see it change state. The rocks have swollen to great pillows of ice. In the spray zone, thin branches weigh heavy with columns of ice. On some, icicle spikes poke sideways, blown crooked by the wind. *Sssssshhh.* The lake is sighing, the lake is seething—what is it? Big clots of ice lift up and down in the waves, sloshing against each other. The lake is a gigantic Slurpee, not yet solid. Along the shore the icy water stiffens into floating pads three feet across, an undulating mosaic.

Our feet crunch through grass stalks and hard snow. Ice everywhere. Zen Master Hongzhi says, “Roam and play in samadhi.” How do we move in this landscape of splendid hazard? “Every detail clearly appears before you...People with the original face should embody and fully investigate (the field) without neglecting a single fragment.” Jagged ice floes, burning face, sunset light behind the bare trees. Hongzhi's teaching for winter mind: “Realize mutual response and explore mutual response, then turn around and enter the world...” Sharp wind, sharp attention—winter mind appears within.

We climb back up the hill from the lake, entering the night sky. Full moon rises overhead. The cold penetrates. ❖

BUDDHISM AND THE GLOBAL ECONOMY

by Helena Norberg-Hodge

Helena Norberg-Hodge is Director of the International Society for Ecology and Culture, and Co-Director of the International Forum on Globalization Europe. She has spent roughly half her time over the past 21 years in Ladakh ("Little Tibet"), and has come to know this traditional Buddhist culture quite intimately. When not in Ladakh, she lectures extensively in Europe and America. Her book, Ancient Futures: Learning From Ladakh, draws lessons for the industrialized world from Ladakh's ecological and Buddhist way of life.

In the Buddha's day, societies were deeply rooted to their place in the natural world. Economies were more localized. Relations between human culture and nature were relatively unmediated, and direct experiences of the natural world provided the basis for ethical decisions. The Buddha's teachings and precepts were formulated within the context of societies shaped by these direct connections to community and to the living world.

In the modern industrial world, on the other hand, complex technologies and large-scale social institutions have led to a fundamental separation between people, as well as between humans and the living world. Since our daily lives depend largely on a man-made world—the money economy, electric power, cars and highways, the medical system—it's easy to believe we depend more on the *technosphere* than on the *biosphere*. As the scale of the economy grows, it also becomes increasingly difficult for us to know the effects of our actions on nature or on other people. In fact, modern society is based on the assumption that we are separate from and able to control the natural world. Thus the structures and institutions on which we depend are reifications of ignorance and greed—a denial of interdependence and impermanence.

Most Western Buddhists have grown up within the industrial system and have known no other way of life. It can therefore be easy to confuse rapid technological and economic change with impermanence or the cycles of nature, or to believe that the current attempt to amalgamate diverse economies into a so-called "unified" global economy reflects the Buddha's notion of interdependence. The result is sometimes passive acceptance in the face of changes that are not only counter to Buddhist values, but are fundamentally anti-life.

As engaged Buddhists, we have a responsibility to examine current economic trends carefully, in the light of Buddhist teachings. I am convinced that such an examination will engender in us a desire to actively oppose the trend toward a global economy, and to help promote ways of life consistent with more Buddhist economics.

Globalization: Eradicating the Diversity of Life

Through "free trade" treaties and globalization, a single economic system is threatening to encompass the entire planet. This system is concerned almost exclusively with monetary transactions, and largely ignores such non-material aspects of life as family and community, meaningful work, and spiritual values. The focus on monetarized social relations is echoed in the belief that people are motivated primarily by self-interest and endless material desires. Significantly, the economic system of the industrialized world does not set about trying to temper our supposedly self-centered, acquisitive nature, but rather to exploit it.

What does the globalized economy really mean? The president of Nabisco once defined it as "a world of homogeneous consumption"—a world in which people everywhere eat the same food, wear the same clothing, and live in houses built from the same materials. Centuries of colonialism and "development" have already eroded much of the world's cultural diversity, and economic globalization is accelerating the process. Along with multi-lane highways and concrete cities, globalization is bringing to every corner of the planet a cultural landscape dominated by fast-food restaurants, Hollywood films, cellular phones, designer jeans, the Marlboro Man, Barbie.

If globalization is bringing monoculture, then its most profound impact will be on the less industrialized countries of the South, where much of the world's remaining cultural diversity is to be found. In the South, the majority still live in villages, and are still connected more to the biosphere than the technosphere. Because of pressures from globalization, locally-adapted forms of production are being replaced by industrial systems of production that are ever more divorced from natural cycles. In agriculture—the mainstay for rural populations throughout the South—this means a centrally managed, chemical-dependent system designed to deliver a narrow range of transportable

We must not confound the borderless world of free trade with the Buddhist principle of interdependence.

foods to the world market. In the process, farmers are replaced by energy- and capital-intensive machinery, and diversified food production for local communities is replaced by an export monoculture. As the vitality of rural life declines, villagers are rapidly being pulled into squalor in urban shanty towns. The Chinese government, for example, is planning for the urban population to increase by 440 million people in the next 20 years—an explosion that is several times the rate of overall population growth.

Development not only pushes farmers off the land, it also centralizes job opportunities and political power in cities, intensifying the economic pull of urban centers. Advertising and media images, meanwhile, exert powerful psychological pressure to seek a better, more “civilized” life, one based on increased consumption. But since jobs are scarce, only a fraction succeed. The majority end up dispossessed and angry, living in slums in the shadow of advertisements for the American Dream.

Consider traditional architecture, in which structures are built from local resources: stone in France, clay in West Africa, sun-dried bricks in Tibet, bamboo and thatch in the Philippines, felt in Mongolia, and so on. When these building traditions give way to “modern” methods, the plentiful local materials are left unused—while competition skyrockets for the monoculture’s narrow range of structural materials, such as

concrete, steel, and milled lumber. Because it makes everyone dependent on the same resources, globalization creates efficiency for corporations, but it also creates artificial scarcity for consumers, thus heightening competitive pressures.

Individual and cultural self-esteem are eroded by the pressure to live up to media and advertising stereotypes, whose images are invariably based on an urban, Western model: blonde, blue-eyed, and clean. If you are a farmer or are dark-skinned, you are made to feel primitive, inferior. As a consequence, women around the world use dangerous chemicals to lighten their skin and hair, and the market for blue contact lenses is growing from Bangkok to Nairobi to Mexico City. Many Asian women even undergo surgery to make their eyes look more Western.

Uprooting people from rural communities by selling them an unattainable urban white dream is responsible for a dramatic increase in anger and hostility—particularly among young men. In the intensely demoralizing and competitive situation they face, differences of any kind become increasingly significant, and ethnic and racial violence are the all-but-inevitable results.

My experiences in Ladakh and in the Kingdom of Bhutan have made me painfully aware of this connection between the global economy and ethnic conflict. In Ladakh, a Buddhist majority and a Muslim minority



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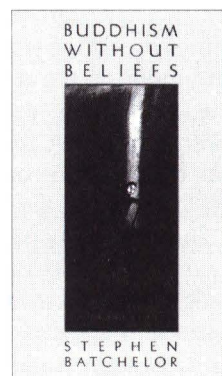
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lived together for 600 years without a single recorded instance of group conflict. In Bhutan, a Hindu minority coexisted peacefully with a slightly larger number of Buddhists for an equally long period. In both cultures, just 15 years' exposure to outside economic pressures resulted in ethnic violence that left many people dead. In these cases it was not the differences between people that led to conflict, but the erosion of their economic power and identity. If globalization continues, the resulting escalation of violence will be unimaginable; after all, globalization means the undermining of the livelihoods and cultural identities of the *majority* of the world's people.

The Response of Engaged Buddhists

If there has been some reluctance on the part of Buddhists to address the disturbing social and economic impact of globalization, I believe one reason is a lack of awareness of the way in which Buddhist teachings about the world are in fact about the *natural* world—not about an artificially constructed “technosphere.” Our challenge is to apply the Buddhist principles taught many centuries ago—in an age of localized social and economic interactions—to the highly complex world in which we now live.

We must not confound the ideals of the “global village” and the borderless world of free trade with the Buddhist principle of interdependence. The buzzwords—*harmonization, integration, union*, etc.—sound as though globalization is making us more interdependent with one another and with the natural world. In fact, it is furthering our *dependence* on large-scale economic structures and technologies, and on a shrinking number of ever-larger corporate monopolies.

The Buddhist notion of impermanence can also be distorted. The Buddha's teachings are about the ever-changing flow of life in the natural world, the cycles of life and death, the impermanence of all beings. The changes precipitated by globalization, however, are based on a denial of the impermanence in nature observed by the Buddha. Megaprojects such as nuclear power plants, dams, and superhighways are not a part of the flow of life that the Buddha taught us to accept, nor is the manipulation of genetic material through biotechnology. Instead, these are manifestations of a world view which seeks to dominate nature, and which pretends that life can be held static.

Two other Buddhist concepts can sometimes be misconstrued to excuse social apathy: karma, and the three poisons of greed, hatred, and delusion. The Law of Karma is one way to explain the growing gap between rich and poor: if one is rich, one must have performed good deeds in the past. However, an honest

examination reveals, of course, that the more immediate cause of social inequality is a global economic system which allows a few to prosper at the expense of the many. Without taking on personal responsibility for a global system that has been built up over centuries, we need to acknowledge the implications of the urbanized “Western” lifestyle: we in the industrialized parts of the world consume roughly ten times our share of the world's resources.

The three poisons of greed, hatred, and delusion are to some extent present in every human being, but today's global consumer culture nurtures the three poisons on both an individual and societal level. At the moment, \$450 billion is spent annually on advertising world-wide, with the aim of convincing people as young as three years old that they need things their parents never knew existed—like Coca-Cola. Before the rise of consumerism, this manufacturing of desire was virtually non-existent.

Our arms have been so lengthened that we no longer see what our hands are doing.

Buddhism can help us in this difficult situation by encouraging us to be compassionate and nonviolent with ourselves as well as others. Many of us avoid an honest examination of our lives for fear of exposing our contribution to global problems. However, once we realize that it is the complex global economy which is at fault, Buddhism can help us to focus on the *system* and its *structural* violence, instead of condemning ourselves or other individuals within that system.

Buddhism, with its holistic approach, can help us to see how various problems are interrelated, and prevent us from wasting our efforts on the symptoms of the crises, rather than focusing on their fundamental causes. Under the surface, even such seemingly unconnected problems as ethnic violence, pollution of the air and water, “broken” families, and cultural disintegration are closely interlinked. Psychologically, such a shift in our perception of the nature of the problems is deeply empowering: being faced with a never-ending litany of seemingly unrelated problems can be overwhelming, but finding the points at which they converge can make our strategy for tackling them more focused and effective.

Stepping Back from the Global Economy

At a structural level, the fundamental problem is *scale*. The ever-expanding scope of the global economy obscures the consequences of our actions; in effect, our arms have been so lengthened that we no longer see what our hands are doing. Thus, our situation exacerbates our ignorance, preventing us from acting out of compassion and wisdom. In smaller communities, people can see the effects of their actions and take responsibility for them. Small-scale structures also limit the

amount of power vested in one individual. Smaller communities reaffirm a sense of place. Each community is unique in its environment, its people, its culture. And human-scale institutions minimize the need for rigid legislation and allow for more flexible decision-making.

But when individuals are at the mercy of faraway, inflexible bureaucracies and fluctuating markets, they feel passive and disempowered. The scale of the modern nation-state has become so large that leaders would be unable to act according to the principles of interdependence, even if they wished to.

Since the global economy is fueled by trans-national institutions that can now overpower any single government, the policy changes most urgently needed are at the international level. In theory, what is required is quite simple: the governments that ratified "free trade" treaties like the Uruguay Round of GATT need to sit down around the same table again. This time, instead of operating in secret—with trans-national corporations at their side—they should be made to represent the interests of the majority. This can only happen if there is far more awareness at the grassroots level, awareness that leads to real pressure on policy-makers.

Pressuring for policy change can seem a daunting task. Many today have abandoned any hope of meaningful political change, thinking that we no longer have any leverage over our political leaders. But in the long run, free trade benefits no one, not even the political leaders and corporate CEOs who are promoting it. Globalization is eroding the tax base and power of nation-states—and that means the budgets and influence of elected officials. It is also threatening the job security of individuals, even at the highest levels of the corporate world.

It is heartening to realize that even the tiniest step towards diversifying economic activity reaps enormous systemic rewards. For instance, smaller, more local transport systems have tremendous benefits, including the creation of jobs, a healthier environment, and a more equitable distribution of resources. Even in the industrialized world, transport money could be spent on building bike paths, foot paths, boat and ferry facilities, or rail service. In Amsterdam, for example, steps are being taken to ban cars from the city center, thus allowing sidewalks to be widened and more bicycle lanes to be built.

Highway-building promotes the growth of corporate super-stores, hyper-markets, and sprawling malls. Spending money instead to build or improve spaces for small-scale public markets—such as those that were once found in virtually every European town and village—would enable local merchants and artisans with limited capital to sell their wares. This would simultaneously enliven town centers and reduce pollution and use of fossil fuels. Similarly, support for farmers' markets would revitalize the agricultural economy of the surrounding regions, while reducing the money spent to process, package, transport, and advertise food.

Steps to decentralize energy development would also be immensely beneficial. In less-industrialized countries, large dams, fossil-fuel plants, and other large-scale energy infrastructures are geared towards the needs of urban areas and export-oriented production. Shifting support instead towards decentralized renewable energy would help to stem the urban tide by strengthening villages and small towns. Since the energy infrastructure in the South is not yet very developed, there is a realistic possibility that this could be implemented in the near future if there were sufficient pressure from activists lobbying Northern banks and funding agencies. [See Deborah Moore, page 25.]

A policy of using trade tariffs to encourage local production of goods would be in the best interest of the majority. Such "protectionism" is not aimed at fellow citizens in other countries; rather, it is a way of defending jobs and local resources against the monopolistic power of trans-national corporations.

A parallel change in tax laws could also provide significant systemic benefits. In almost every country, for example, tax regulations currently discriminate against small businesses. Small-scale production is usually more labor-intensive, and heavy taxes are levied on labor through income taxes, social welfare taxes, value-added taxes, payroll taxes, etc. Meanwhile, tax breaks (accelerated depreciation, investment allowances, tax credits, etc.) are afforded the capital- and energy-intensive technologies used by large corporate producers. Reversing this bias in the tax system would create more jobs by favoring people instead of machines.

The ability to shift profits, operating costs, and investment capital between far-flung operations has played a key role in the growth of ever more powerful trans-national corporations. Today, the ease with which capital can be transferred around the world allows corporations to hold sovereign nations hostage—simply by threatening to leave and take their jobs with them if governments attempt to regulate or restrict their activities. Rules that limit the free flow of capital therefore help to reduce the advantage that huge corporations have over smaller, more local enterprises and would make corporations more accountable to the places where they operate.

Until now, governments of every stripe have embraced free trade policies in the belief that they will cure their ailing economies. However, since these policies are, in fact, eroding the tax base, destroying countless businesses, and leading to widespread unemployment, policy-makers will soon be forced to wake up to the real impact of free trade.

Localization: Towards a Buddhist Economics

Even now, without any help from government or industry, people are starting to change the economy from the bottom up. This *localization* has begun spon-

taneously, in countless communities all around the world. Because localization means adaptation to cultural and biological diversity, no single “blueprint” is appropriate everywhere. There are many possibilities.

In many towns, for example, community banks and loan funds have been set up, thereby increasing the capital available to local residents and businesses and allowing people to invest in their neighbors and their community, rather than in a faceless global economy.

In other communities, “buy-local” campaigns are helping locally-owned businesses survive even when pitted against heavily subsidized corporate competitors. These campaigns not only help to keep money from leaking out of the local economy, but also help educate people about the hidden costs—to their own jobs, to the community and the environment—in purchasing cheaper but distantly produced products. Across the United States, Canada, and Europe, grassroots organizations have emerged in response to the intrusion of huge trans-national marketing chains into rural and small-town economies. For instance, the McDonald’s corporation—which added 900 restaurants worldwide in 1993 and plans to add a new restaurant every three hours in the

coming years—has met with grassroots resistance in at least two dozen countries, and this resistance is sometimes effective. In the United States and Canada, the rapid expansion of Wal-Mart, the world’s largest retailer, has spawned a whole network of activists working to protect jobs and the fabric of their communities from these sprawling “superstores.”

In some communities, Local Exchange and Trading Systems (LETS) have been established as an organized, large-scale bartering system. People list the services or goods they have to offer and the amount they expect in return. Their account is credited for goods or services they provide to other LETS members, and they can use those credits to purchase goods or services from anyone else in the system, including carpentry, car repair, baby-sitting, sewing, school tuition, house-painting, accounting, healthcare, and legal assistance, as well as locally produced goods and farm products. Thus, even people with little or no “real” money can participate in the local economy. LETS systems have sprung up in the United Kingdom (where there are over 250 in operation), Ireland, Canada, France, Argentina, the United States, Australia, and New Zealand. They have been particularly beneficial in areas with high unemployment. The city government of Birmingham, England—where unemployment hovers at 20 percent—has been a co-sponsor of a highly successful LETS scheme. The psychological benefits are as important as the economic benefits: a large number of people who were once

merely “unemployed” and therefore “useless”—can be valued for their skills and knowledge.

One of the most exciting grassroots efforts is the Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) movement, in which consumers in towns and cities link up directly with a nearby farmer. In some cases, consumers purchase an entire season’s produce in advance, sharing the risk with the farmer. In others, shares of the harvest are purchased in monthly or quarterly installments. Consumers usually have a chance to visit the farm where their food is grown, and in some cases their help on the farm is welcomed. While small farmers linked to the industrial system continue to fail every year at an alarming rate, CSAs are allowing small-scale, diversified farms to thrive in growing numbers. CSAs have spread rapidly throughout Europe, North America, Australia, and Japan.

These and countless other initiatives around the world reflect a growing awareness that it is far more sensible to depend on our neighbors and the living world around us than to depend on a global economic system based on technology and corporate institutions. Buddhism provides us with both the imperative and the tools to challenge the economic structures that are creating suffering the world over. How can we claim to be Buddhist and simultaneously support structures that are so clearly contrary to Buddha’s teachings?

The economic and structural changes needed will inevitably require shifts at the personal level as well. We need to rediscover the joys of being embedded in community. We need to rediscover a sense of connection to the place where we live. The globalization of culture and information has led to a way of life in which the nearby is often treated with contempt. We get news from China but not from next door, and at the touch of a TV button we have access to all the wildlife of Africa. As a consequence, our immediate surroundings may seem dull by comparison. A sense of place means helping ourselves and our children to see the living environment around us: reconnecting with the sources of our food—perhaps even growing some of our own—and learning to recognize the cycles of the seasons, the characteristics of flora and fauna.

As the Buddha taught, our spiritual awakening comes from making a connection to others and to nature. In this way we “experience” the teachings of impermanence and interdependence, principles which exhort us to interact with others and with nature in a wise, compassionate, and sustainable way. ❖

[The preceding piece will appear in the forthcoming anthology, tentatively titled *Entering the Realm of Reality: Towards Dhammic Societies*, to be published by the International Network of Engaged Buddhists.]

At the touch of a TV button we have access to all the wildlife of Africa. As a consequence, our immediate surroundings may seem dull by comparison.



Photo by Nonnie Welch

THINK LIKE WATER

Fran Peavey chats with Susan Moon

Fran Peavey is a long-time social change worker, writer, and comedian. Her organization, Friends of the Ganges, has branches in San Francisco, Sweden, and Australia. For a detailed story about Fran's work in cleaning up the Ganges river, see "A Visit to Kamauli" in the Spring 1995 issue of Turning Wheel.

Susan Moon talked with Fran in February, 1997.

Susan Moon: So you're about to go back to India to work on cleaning up the Ganges some more.

Fran Peavey: Right. I leave tomorrow. For the last 15 years, I've been going there once or twice a year. The Ganges is just an incredible river. It has seduced me, sucked me into water.

Sue: So is the Ganges cleaner now than when you started?

Fran: Yes. When we started, there was no sewage treatment at all. There were five pumping stations built by the World Bank, but they had never worked. The World Bank has no criteria for accountability. Now all five stations are working, though not all that well.

There used to be a lot of dead human bodies float-

ing around in the river. When a poor person died in the hospital, an orderly would be sent by the hospital with some money and the body to take to the cremation ghats. But the orderlies sometimes just kept the money and dumped the body in the river.

Now there's an electric crematorium that works most of the time. The hospital no longer sends orderlies with money, because these crematoria are so inexpensive that even the poorest person can pay for it. It used to cost about 700 rupees to be cremated. That's three months salary! Now it's between 50 and 75 rupees.

Sue: Where do the ashes go?

Fran: Into the river. And the ashes don't hurt the river—in fact, they're healthy for the Ganges. The ashes are disposed of with all the usual religious ritual, with the exception of cracking the head open to let the soul out.

Sue: What do you hope to do in India this time?

Fran: When we go to India we try to do two things. First, we try to work with the culture, teach people not to pollute the river. By the way, we're working with *Indian* engineers; it's not just a bunch of foreigners coming in

and telling people what to do. We have poetry, folk music, and drama festivals to get people to realize that it's actually in their tradition to care for the Ganges.

Second, we do a lot of technological work. Originally, we thought the government would come up with good designs and clean the river. But they really boondoggled the big sewage treatment plant—it's a disaster, what it's doing to the environment. So we realized we'd have to find the sociological and technological answers ourselves. We also have to figure out how to fund our work. We're going to have to find a way to pay for a new, better sewer that will take the sewage by gravity to an oxidation pond downstream. We won't have to depend on those pumps.

Sue: What have you learned about water from this work?

Fran: First of all, there's going to be no new water. All the water we have has been here since the early days of the planet. And water always stays water. It might evaporate and go to the clouds, but it comes down again, somewhere, as water. The water that comes out of your tap was probably once in the Ganges river.

Sue: We have the same amount of water we've always had?

Fran: Yes. And that's astonishing. The second thing I've learned is how powerful water is. If water goes over a rock, it digs a hole in the back of the rock, and eventually that rock will move. It can wear away anything. Water doesn't like to go in a straight line; it likes to meander. Water travels in sheets, thinner than a piece of paper. In any river, there are many rivers. In the Ganges, there are separate, coherent sheets that can be defined by temperature, speed, and by how clear the water is. So one sheet of water travels together, and next to it is another sheet traveling slightly differently. As the sheets of water rub against each other, they clean each other with a bit of friction. Water left by itself will clean itself, if we don't put too much junk into it. Water is a naturally regenerating substance.

The old idea about water is that it's just a chemical substance, H₂O. The new idea is that water is living, because it's in all living things. In fact, water is the unifying source of our life. The ramifications of that are awesome. If you stimulate it, it responds. It takes the form of any container you put it in. It's supple, flexible, easy-going—and yet, you never want to mess with water, because of its power.

I've come to respect water. In fact, I would like to *be* like water. To be able to move into any deep place, always seeking the depths for myself. And in any vessel, taking its shape. Able to move with a power and a knowing. If I have to go over a rock, I know it will move eventually.

Sue: It takes patience.

Each of us has our own pile of shit to deal with each day. Usually we unconsciously ask our servant, water, to take care of it for us. "Here, water, let me flush the toilet. Take my waste out of my sight, out of my house. Take the kitchen waste away as I turn on my garbage disposal. Clean my dishes, my clothes, my body." Water has a worse life than Cinderella.

How mindfully and how kindly we care for our waste tells us as much about the true nature of our culture as it tells us about our individual character. When we put our head down on the pillow at night, we will be able to rest easily if we can say we deposited our waste where it can be composted, and something good for life on earth can come from it. If we have merely passed that shit on to others, have left it for some person or some river to clean up for us, who are we? Our souls cannot know peace.

Water is the universal servant. It carries whatever it is given to carry. Sewage, logs, oil, boats. Water carries our dirt and the refuse of our life off to the ocean.

Since water is the base of all life, it too must be seen as living. Will there ever be a water liberation movement? —*Fran Peavey*

Fran: Water is very patient. And strong. And confident.

Sue: And gentle.

Fran: What I'm doing this year is learning to think like water. To live like water.

Sue: Can you give me an example of some watery thing you've learned to do?

Fran: Social change workers often think of strategies in militaristic terms—as if we can get control. But now I'm trying to look at social change as a flowing, as my life bringing more life to whatever I touch. Honoring life whenever I flow next to it. Giving it drink and sustenance. I become less control-oriented, more oriented toward service.

All of this Ganga has taught me.

Sue: Have you become more able to take the shape of the container you're in?

Fran: I hope so. I can never tell how I'm doing, but it's my goal. When I am changing, I'm the most vital and most exciting. Just like water. When water is moving on a grade, it just bubbles and burbles. It's so alive. And that's the way we are, as human beings. We're most alive when we're changing. So I need to value

Continued on page 23



Photo by Meredith Stout

We Wash Our Bowls in This Water
by Gary Snyder

"The 1.5 billion cubic kilometers of water on the earth are split by photosynthesis and reconstituted by respiration once every two million years or so."

A day on the ragged North Pacific coast gets soaked by whipping mist, rainsqualls tumbling, mountain mirror ponds, snowfield slush, rock-wash creeks, earfulls of falls, sworls of ridge-edge snowflakes, swift gravelly rivers, tidewater crumbly glaciers, high hanging glaciers, shore-side mud pools, icebergs, streams looping through the tideflats, spume of brine, distant soft rain drooping from a cloud,

sea lions lazing under the surface of the sea—

*We wash our bowls in this water
It has the flavor of ambrosial dew—*

•

Beaching the raft, stagger out and shake off wetness like a bear,
stand on the sandbar, rest from the river being

upwellings, sideswirls, backswirls
curl-overs, outripples, eddies, chops and swells

wash-overs, shallows confluence and turbulence wash-seam
wavelets, riffles, saying

"A hydraulic's a cross between a wave and a hole,
—you get a weir effect.

Pillow-rock's a total fold-back over a hole,
it shows spit on the top of the wave

A haystack's a series of waves at the bottom of a tight channel
there's a tongue of the rapids—the slick tongue—the 'v'—
some holes are 'keepers', they won't let you through;
eddies, backflows, we say 'eddies are your friends.'

Current differential, it can suck you down
vertical boils are straight-up eddies spinning,
herringbone waves curl under and come back.

Well, let's get going, get back to the rafts."
Swing the big oars,
head into a storm.

*We offer it to all demons and spirits
May all be filled and satisfied.
Om makula sai svaha!*

•

Su Tung-p'o sat out one whole night by a creek on the slopes of
Mt. Lu. Next morning he showed this poem to his teacher:

The stream with its sounds is a long broad tongue
The looming mountain is a wide awake body
Throughout the night song after song
How can I speak at dawn.

Old Master Chang-tsung approved him. Two centuries later
Dogen said,

"Sounds of streams and shapes of mountains.
The sounds never stop and the shapes never cease.

Was it Su who woke
or was it the mountains and streams?
Billions of beings see the morning star
and all become Buddhas!
If *you*, who are valley streams and looming
mountains,
can't throw some light on the nature of ridges and rivers,
who can?"

[Reprinted by permission from *Mountains and Rivers Without End*, by Gary Snyder,
Counterpoint, 1996, \$20]

A BATH WITH ALL BEINGS

by Shannon Hickey

A Zen koan in the *Blue Cliff Record*, Case 78, tells the story of 16 bodhisattvas who went to take a bath. As they stepped into the steaming water, they all realized enlightenment simultaneously.

Any sort of bath could have this effect (or, since it's a Zen story, no bath). But if you've ever taken the bath that follows Tangaryo at Tassajara Monastery, you might know exactly what the koan means.

Tangaryo is a sort of "Zen hazing" that new entrants to the monastery must survive before they can be formally admitted. It is, essentially, five days of non-stop sitting. Tangaryo sitters are not supposed to read, write, speak or look around unless absolutely necessary during the five days. Nor do they bathe.

The first two or three days are pretty much unremitting hell. But as the days wear on, one gives up trying to figure out how to get through. Eventually, there is just sitting, and the sounds of life around the monastery, and thoughts coming and going, and the pain in knees and shoulders. It's just whatever it is.

And when, eventually, it's over, you get a bath. The most glorious bath. The survivors line up and walk—or limp—in procession to Tassajara's famous mineral

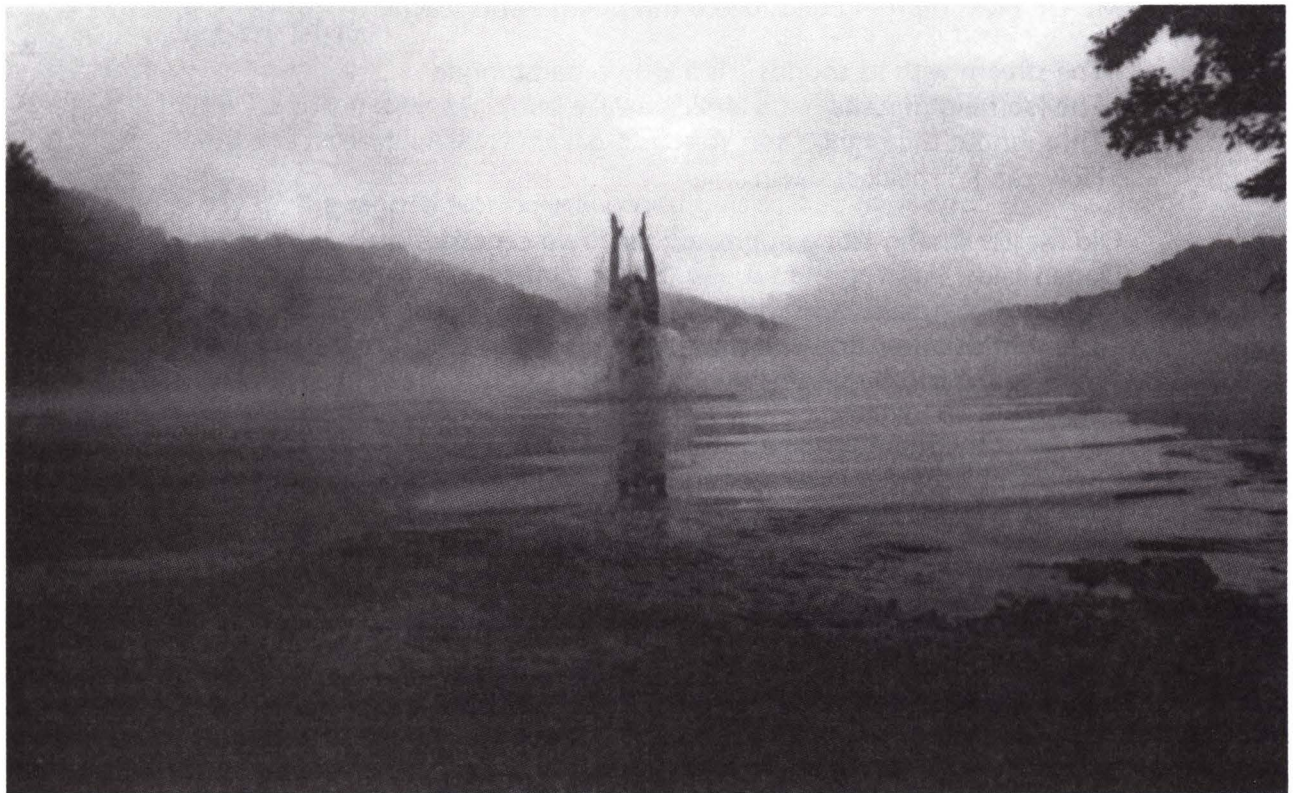
pools, cherished for centuries for the healing properties they are believed to possess. Above the altar outside the bathhouse is a painting of those 16 bodhisattvas in their bath. Incense is offered, bows are made, and the men and women proceed to their respective bathing areas.

First comes a shower to scrub off five days of accumulated grunge. What pleasure to lather up the hair and feel the soap suds slide down the skin toward the drain. The delicious scrape of a soft-bristle brush on the back. The beat of water from the shower head. The groans of delight from stiff, weary comrades who have suffered together in silent solidarity. And then there's the plunge.

Tassajara's plunges are chest-deep, tile-lined pools of mineral water, kept between 108 and 112 degrees Fahrenheit. Tall glass windows look out onto Tassajara creek and a steep, tree-studded hillside. Few experiences could be more exquisite than to lower oneself into that sulfurous brew and let the aches of Tangaryo melt away.

After my post-Tangaryo plunge, I stood with my comrades on the rear deck of the bathhouse. Steam wafted from our skin as we listened to the creek rushing past and stared at a sky dense with stars.

A French woman said, in her Parisian accent, "When I was sitting, I had many fantasies about zis bath. But I imagined it a little differently. Ze bank across ze creek



Burr Oak Lake, Ohio. Photo by Xiaomin Gu

was all covered wiz snow. And zere, among ze trees, a puma stood in ze moonlight.”

The Scottish woman standing next to me turned and whispered, “My fantasies were much more prosaic—a pint o’ beer and a chicken sandwich.”

So what has all this to do with engaged Buddhism? What the 16 bodhisattvas saw, prompted by the touch of water on their skins, was the “subtle essence of water”—the endless interdependence of all things. Tassajara’s bathhouse is a fine embodiment of that principle, created and sustained as it is by countless beings.

The hot springs were known centuries ago by the Esalen Indians, who used them to cure a variety of ailments. According to legend, the chief of a tribe in the Santa Lucia mountains was distraught because his beloved younger sister was dying of an illness no one could cure. They journeyed toward the coast to find a cure, but by the time they reached Tassajara Creek, the sister was so close to death she could go no farther. The chief prayed passionately, offering his own life in exchange for hers. As he died, his hot tears spilled across the rocks and touched his sister, who rose fully healed.

Around 1870, in a move all too typical of white settlers, Jack Borden staked a claim to the land, built a rock structure near the springs, and began exploiting their commercial possibilities. Borden sold the property a few years later to a man who built a small log hotel and some cabins, and a rock dining room and bathhouse.

In 1884, a San Jose businessman bought Tassajara and began cutting a proper road from Jamesburg to the hot springs. The narrow, precipitous, 14-mile road ascends 5,000 feet, then plunges 3,500 feet into a narrow canyon. The job took five years of hard labor with shovels, pickaxes, and horse plows. The original road crew became exhausted by the task and a Chinese crew was hired to finish the last eight miles.

The resort was expanded, it changed owners, it survived fire and flood. In 1966, San Francisco Zen Center purchased Tassajara after considerable fundraising efforts, including a “Zenefit” concert in San Francisco featuring the Grateful Dead and Big Brother and the Holding Company. The following year, an inaugural intensive “practice period” was held in America’s first Buddhist monastery.

A major forest fire in 1977 surrounded Tassajara and took more than two weeks to contain. In 1978, the zendo caught fire and burned to the ground, along with the library, office, and linen room.

The old bathhouse was rebuilt in 1984, but the hillside behind it was later determined to be unstable. The new bathhouse, a gorgeous, Japanese-style structure of wood, tile and glass, was built between 1993 and 1995, after another fundraising campaign.

Thus, countless people have helped create the place where stiff, aching Tangaryo students—and many others—can take the best bath of their lives. In addition to the

Countless people have helped create the place where stiff, aching Tangaryo students can take the best bath of their lives.

people who built and rebuilt Tassajara’s buildings, there are those who saved the place from fire, the guests and donors who fund Tassajara operations, the residents who clean and maintain the monastery and bathhouse every day. Each of those people is, in turn, supported by a vast network of other beings, an endless web of interconnections.

No wonder the bodhisattvas realized their profound connection to all beings the moment they felt the touch of hot water on their skins. They were bathing with everyone, past and present.

A bath—whether at Tassajara or in some urban apartment—is also a respite from the rigors of practice. One of my favorite Buddhist images is that of Kuan-yin, the bodhisattva of compassion, seated, at rest. She reminds me that while I’m out in the world trying to help in whatever ways I can, I must also remember to stop, be quiet, and refresh myself.

“A bath is like the zendo,” commented Sojun Mel Weitsman, abbot of Berkeley Zen Center. “And the water is everywhere.” ❖

Shannon Hickey is a San Francisco Bay Area writer and editor, currently participating in the practice period at Tassajara Zen Mountain Monastery.

Think Like Water (from page 19)

change, instead of resisting it with such tenacity as to make myself or other people miserable.

Another thing I’m trying to learn is how to kneel. I have a Protestant backbone. We Protestants, we’re not kneelers. But water knows how to get down. I would like to find that level of surrender that would allow me to kneel authentically.

Sue: Have you put your knees on the floor yet?

Fran: I haven’t gotten there yet. But I’ve been practicing in my office, and I don’t think I can kneel indoors. My challenge is to kneel before the ocean, or before a tree. In my office, I’ve only managed to move from my desk chair to the sofa.

Sue: But you’re still moving. Like water, you’re changing. Water is a great teacher, isn’t it?

Fran: Think like water. Be like water. Go for the depth. ❖

Biographical info about Fran Peavey is at the beginning of this article. Susan Moon is editor of Turning Wheel.

GOING PHASE AND RETURNING PHASE

by Reverend Kenryu Tsuji

Death is neither the end of life nor termination of life's activity.

Waters of the river flow onward to reach the wide expanse of the sea. In time, the water evaporates and becomes clouds. When moisture saturates cumulus clouds it is released, returning to the surface of the earth as rain. From the skies the rain sustains the life of all living things, from the tallest redwoods to the tiniest crawling insects.

Water flowing in the sea may be called *oso eko*, the going phase of movement. Raindrops falling to the earth may be seen as *genso eko*, that is, water returning to its place of origin. Shinran, just before he died, said, *When my life has run its course, I shall go to the Pure Land and return again, and again, like waves of the Waka-no-Ura bay breaking upon the shore... When two of you rejoice, remember there are three, as Shinran will be there too.*

All human life is a source of energy, of compassion stored in the depth of its innate buddhahood. It may be only a microscopic part of cosmic compassion of the universe, which we religiously call *Amida Buddha*. But once immersed in the cosmic compassion, this energy is a mighty current flowing harmoniously.

Human beings are so attached to the body that it is thought that death of the body is the end of everything. In reality, it is the beginning of interaction with the entire universe. When the body is buried in the ground, it becomes soil in which all living things grow. Shinran Shonin said, *When I die, throw my body in the Kamo river to feed the fish.* He was realizing oneness with all forms of life. As the body is cremated, smoke rises heavenward and gas molecules enter the atmosphere that we breathe. This is the influence of physical energy.

Human life is more than physical energy. It is also moral and spiritual energy released upon the whole

world. Intangible influence is often difficult to perceive. Nonetheless, it continues to function throughout the universe. How many times have we read the words of Buddha and other masters for inspiration, comfort, strength, and a practical guide to living? How many times have you picked up an old letter written by your long-departed mother or father, wife or husband, and quietly contemplated its contents?

Just as waters of the river return from the ocean to quench a thirsty planet, human energy now purified in buddhahood—the Pure Land—returns to the world, continuing its perpetual work of compassion. This is *genso eko*. Too often the Pure Land is considered a static place of eternal rest far removed from the affairs of worldly beings.

Contrary to this belief, the true Pure Land is where cosmic compassion is generated and perpetually regenerated. Professor Kenko Futaba, Buddhist historian, philosopher, and president of Kyoto Women's College, wrote in an article entitled, *The Lost Pure Land*, "The Pure Land Teaching is stumbling over its concept of 'Pure Land'... This condition has alienated Jodo teaching from modern life and made it difficult for its teachers to formulate a viable social doctrine. It has contributed to the loss of the sangha's meaning in society.

"Seeking the Pure Land means to reject this *bonno* [delusion] ridden life of greed, anger, and folly. A sangha that has forgotten the search for the Pure Land is a sangha which has forgotten how to reject such a life. It has not awakened to its *bonno*, and blindly affirms the *bonno*-ridden life. Unless this ego-centered life is rejected by the sangha, how can it possibly work to improve the world? Even if human effort to do our best to transform evil to good is empty, finite, relative, and incomplete, human effort is the only proof of the reality of the Pure Land. Awakening to a genuine desire for the realization of the ideals of the Pure Land in history, and in the world, is a challenge to modern Pure Land followers." ❖

[Reprinted by permission from *The Wheel of Dharma* (December, 1996), the newspaper of the Buddhist Churches of America]

Rev. Tsuji is a Jodo Shinshu minister at Ekoji Buddhist Temple in Springfield, Virginia.

Prudence See



- Wetlands sustain one third of all endangered and threatened species in the U.S.
- Over 50% of the world's wetlands have been lost or degraded through dam projects, agricultural development, urbanization, and contamination.

—Source: Environmental Defense Fund

THINKING SMALL ABOUT THE WORLD'S WATER

by Deborah Moore

As villagers in India are flooded out of their homes by World Bank-financed dam projects, they have no assurances that they will have access to the electricity or drinking water produced by the dams. The same story is repeated in many parts of the "developing" world. Ethnic Hungarians in the Danube River Valley lost wetlands, and their groundwater was drastically lowered, due to Slovakia's diversion of 85 percent of the river's flow via dam, canal, and weir. And Saddam Hussein drained the swampy homelands of the Marsh Arabs, destroying their culture and livelihoods.

Shortages and other water-related problems aren't limited to less developed countries. For instance, the Ogallala aquifer under the American plains—which supplies nearly one-third of all groundwater used in irrigation in the U.S.—is running out because of over-pumping of water. Some scientists think this critical aquifer could be totally depleted by the middle of the next century.

As populations and demands for water grow, so does the potential for violent conflict. But beneath the dramatic examples lies a pervasive, daily battle where more than a billion people struggle to collect enough clean drinking water to survive. At the same time, irrigation currently consumes about 70 percent of the world's water supplies, and more than half of that water is wasted, causing waterlogging and salinization. The use and misuse of water causes disease via contaminated water supplies and has decimated fisheries that provide over 20 percent of the world's protein. In addition, more than 40 percent of the world's population gets its water from supplies that originate outside their national borders, making joint management of water supplies imperative.

A dam-building craze spread after World War II, spawning high hopes for generating cheap electricity to feed the world. Foreign aid agencies, especially the World Bank, spread the enthusiasm. In the 1960s, Brazil took the bait and proceeded to dam the San Francisco River. Two decades and several private and bank-supported projects later, four towns are under water, 170,000 people are displaced, fertile land is flooded and newly irrigated lands are being lost to salinization. Meanwhile, the "cheap" electricity goes elsewhere, leaving the local people in the dark.

The World Bank continues to dam the world, despite the drastic consequences of large dams. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) around the world are now challenging multilateral development banks and com-

mercial banks to invest in small-scale alternatives that will better combat the crises of water scarcity and pollution.

"There is not a single person at the World Bank who still thinks that large dam projects are environmentally or economically viable—yet the World Bank will continue to fund the construction of large dams," says a World Bank official who requested anonymity. "Why? Because of the powerful engineering and construction lobbies within the United States and Germany."

In the last decade, governments and donor agencies like the World Bank invested more than \$130 billion in public funds to bring drinking water to more than one billion people. However, these numbers mask the inefficiency of some of the investments. For example, of

the \$35 billion the World Bank invested, less than 5 percent was invested in rural drinking water projects, 2.3 percent went to water conservation, and only 0.4 percent was invested in small-scale irrigation. While new, large-scale irrigation projects can cost

more than \$3000 per acre, improvements in water conservation can cost as little as \$60 an acre, cut water use almost in half, and still increase crop yields.

In many cases, it is far cheaper to invest in improving efficiency through water and energy conservation, rather than to build new projects.

To retool our approach to water management, communities will have to be more involved in both managing and financing water systems at the local level. Most often communities themselves know what they want and need, and they commonly are willing to pay for services. Yet in many cases they have not been allowed to have a voice in the process, or access to needed capital.

Further, we need to look for ways to ensure that equitable and environmentally sound management of water is promoted among countries sharing water resources. The international community would do well to start with efforts to resolve the dispute between Hungary and Slovakia, which would set precedents for other regions, such as the Nile River in Africa and the La Plata River Basin in South America.

As governments and communities work together to end the daily struggle for safe, clean drinking water, progress should be made toward promoting peaceful development that protects the health, human rights, and sustainable livelihoods of all. ♦

Deborah Moore is a scientist with the Environmental Defense Fund's International Program, focusing on reform of the World Bank and other international development organizations.

[Please see page 42 for "What You Can Do" about water.]

The World Bank continues to dam the world, despite the drastic consequences of large dams.

rain through huge red leaves sea — above and below — sea floor

(and) sky — (freezing night) — though leaves sea is at day, rain
— man's lying breathing beside one is enhanced from (and: it being in)
night, (night itself: not from 'freezing night')? — night can 'not' 'be'
enhanced 'from' the man's soft breathing (which is beside one) —

as: rain in it (day, which is the vast red leaves sea)

isn't by the one's horizontal lying breathing. rain lying pouring,
sheets — one is 'by' someone (as not enhancing rain — only)

breathing — running together on the rise. his horizontal lying
— 'at' night.

~~~~~

— struggle is voluptuous later — (in it) — (nothing's after) —  
(voluptuous enjoyment is after —) (as is nothing)

~~~~~

raw neck is in fact on vertical streaming clouds in vast blue
horizon

'walking' or 'sitting'

~~~~~

it is by the same blue horizon

but having enough sleep, sleeping in which there's a circuit or  
round so that the black night is in it (doesn't even appear — in it) —  
one could still freely perceive outside?

it — not one has no form?

—Leslie Scalapino  
(from "New Time")

# PRESERVING THE WILDNESS OF URBAN STREAMS

by Matthias St. John

When I was a boy growing up in Berkeley, California, the creek near my home was my stomping ground. With my brother Nick and friend Jake I would don old tennis shoes, dirty blue jeans, and a baseball cap, and armed with walking sticks and a flashlight we would head out to explore The Creek. The Creek, which flowed into San Francisco Bay, represented many things to me: it was “nature”—the wildest thing in a city; and it was “mystery”—a place of the unknown, waiting to be explored.

Being an urban stream, it was much changed from its condition before a city was built around and on top of it. Major portions of the creek flowed underground in large concrete culverts. Storm-water runoff from streets emptied into storm drains which flowed into the creek. These conditions only added to its mystery for me, as we plodded upstream through the underground tunnels, our flashlight providing just enough light to make out imaginary shapes of water rats and spiders. Above ground we rested on the stream bank, cheering for our twig boats to reach the finish line first. I turned over rocks, observing the crawly-things that inhabited the creek. In high school I scraped algae from rocks I found in the creek, and grew it in Mason jars for a biology experiment.

As I have gotten older, my love for streams has only grown. Now a graduate student in Seattle, I am studying urban streams and how to protect them.

As a boy, I didn't think about how my actions influenced the streams I played in. I don't think most people realize the ways in which streams are affected by what we do in our daily lives. But in urban areas, we have a big impact on the streams that pass through our cities.

Here in the Pacific Northwest, as well as in other regions of the world, urban development has changed the amount of water flowing in urban streams, the quality of this water, the shape of these streams, and the abundance and types of plants and animals living in them. One of the most notable changes associated with urban development is the increase in the amount of impervious surfaces that cover the land, including roads, parking lots, and rooftops. Other characteristics associated with urbanization include the removal of vegetation, soil compaction caused by construction

activity, and the import of chemicals associated with modern human civilizations. These changes to the landscape also change the streams.

Before urban development in the Pacific Northwest, the ground absorbed most of the rainfall. The water percolated through the ground and *gradually* flowed into streams. Streams in the Pacific Northwest which have not been affected by urban development typically have intact vegetation on the stream banks, wood and large stones in the stream channel, and alternating deep pools and shallow sections called riffles.

As roads, parking lots, homes, and industries are constructed, the earth is covered over and the pathway by which rainfall naturally enters the ground is impeded. The rain water quickly flows over the impervious

surfaces, and enters the storm drains which empty into streams. In fact, the biggest problem facing urban streams is that there is simply too much water flowing into them during storms. As they fill with swiftly flowing water the banks and the channel bottom become susceptible to erosion, and surrounding areas can be

threatened by flooding. Erosion changes the shape of the streams. Urban streams typically have few pools or developed riffles, and their steep banks do not support plant growth. The channel bottom often becomes clogged with sediment and sand which is washed in from the surrounding landscape.

Another problem is that pollutants such as petroleum from our cars, pesticides that are applied to our lawns and gardens, and nutrients in fertilizers, such as phosphorus, are washed into streams when it rains. These pollutants can have immediate or long-term toxic effects on plants and animals, or, as in the case of phosphorus, they can cause excessive growth of aquatic plants to the point where they become a nuisance.

As a result of the toxins and the increased flow of water, urban streams tend to lack the habitat conditions necessary to support aquatic organisms. The diversity of aquatic organisms is a critical indicator of the health of a stream, and, sadly, most urban streams in the Pacific Northwest do not support diverse populations of aquatic organisms

In the Pacific Northwest, the annual salmon run represents the health and vitality of the natural world, the cycle of life in which birth and death are intertwined. Much of the art work made by native

*In underground tunnels, our flashlight provided just enough light to make out imaginary shapes of water rats and spiders.*

Americans from the region contains images of salmon. As the loss of adequate stream habitat causes a dramatic decline in salmon, an important symbol of the region's vitality is lost; a part of the soul of the Northwest is lost; the natural world seems incomplete.

The good news is that efforts are being made around the country to minimize the detrimental affects of urban development on streams, rivers, and lakes. Resource management agencies implement "best management practices," meaning structural and managerial practices that prevent or reduce pollution of water.

As part of my graduate work I am researching ways of improving the quality of water which flows off highways during storms, by installing alternative types of pavement on highway shoulders. It turns out that a "porous" asphalt road shoulder can significantly reduce the volume of runoff, as well as the amount of pollutants in the runoff.

The problems facing urban streams and lakes are very complex, with numerous interacting variables, and it's easy for me to feel overwhelmed. But I do believe that with careful attention and diligence, we can learn to protect these aquatic systems.

Though the term "best management practice" is a technical one used by scientists and engineers, I believe we all can apply this concept to our daily lives. Each of us can make practical changes in our own lives, which, added together, can help to protect our urban streams. We can install rain barrels to collect runoff from our rooftops to use later on our gardens, and install "porous pavements" in our driveways to reduce the amount of runoff from our homes. We can reduce, or

even eliminate, the use of fertilizers and pesticides on our gardens and lawns. We can join with others in our communities to plant native trees on stream banks.

Most importantly, we must remember that we are an integral part of the environment we live in. The storm drain at the side of the road eventually drains to a stream, a bay, an ocean. If we dump paint thinner into the storm drain, or if fertilizers from our lawn get washed off during a storm, these pollutants will flow into a downstream body of water.

Water is the very means by which we survive, and water connects us all. Everything we do affects something, or someone, downstream from us. So let's celebrate water; let's respect and protect it.

Ravenna Creek runs through a forested ravine near my home in Seattle. Within a bustling city, this ravine has become a refuge for many people. I have often walked my dog Shakespeare along its trails, and every time I do so I feel grateful that such a wonderful place exists. Signs printed in children's handwriting are posted near the creek, saying that school groups have planted native vegetation along the creek as part of a stream bank erosion control project. I imagine those children enjoying Ravenna Creek as much as I enjoyed the creek of my childhood. And I hope they are learning about the ways in which their lives affect the life of the creek. With care, dedication, and mindfulness, urban creeks can remain a wonderful part of our lives. ❖

*Matthias St. John is a graduate student at the University of Washington in the Environmental Engineering and Science Program.*

Photo by Xiaomin Gu



# THE ENERGY OF WATER

by Vicki Cohn Pollard

Water is a miraculous substance, a wondrous energy that moves in the deep places of nature—including the depths in ourselves. In the Five Elements of Classical Acupuncture, each season is correlated with a different element. The Water Element is associated with winter. Wood is about spring, Fire about summer, Earth is late summer, and Metal is associated with autumn. Each energy feeds the next, just as each season prepares the way for the one that follows. As we move into springtime, it is helpful to examine how we lived during the past winter. Did we fill ourselves with the qualities of the Water Element that we need in order to move into spring in a healthy, balanced way? We are familiar with the energies of spring. The quality and mystery inherent in Water are less accessible to us.

The winter seeds in the ground are blueprints for what will come. They are promises. While huge energies are condensed in the seed, life is reduced to bare bones, to what is essential. Unlike the playful dance of summer's Fire, Water is a quieter, deeper energy. In Water time, we are drawn to go deep into ourselves, to seek to know who we are in our essence, not in our activity. In Maine, where I live, we spend more time inside, reflecting, reading by the fire. We are replenishing our reserves, preparing for the spring to come. And water energy is part of our life all year long.

Each of the elements has one of our five senses associated with it. Listening is emphasized in Water. On a cold, bright, winter morning, I can listen, bringing my attention to the silence. This is a listening with patience; there is no hurry, no movement. I can hear with no expectations, with no need to change anything. When I listen in this Water way, I encourage a deep intimacy—permitting myself and others just to be.

In Chinese medicine, there are five emotions associated with the Five Elements, each arising in its own time. It is natural to feel fear during the winter. Will the reserves I have last me until spring? Will there be enough food, heat, light?

In facing our fear, we come to know its companion, courage. Have you ever stretched yourself beyond your limits to know the exhilaration of overcoming fear? Rock-climbing or high-ropes courses, speaking up for something one believes in, even though trembling inside—these kinds of experiences are born in the depths of Water's fear and strength.

As it is for many people, entry into the energy of the Water element often has been difficult for me. Only slowly have I come to understand and value this energy within me.

All my life I have been busy, more comfortable doing than being still. Even as a child, I didn't spend much time just sitting quietly, looking at things around me. I was always on the go, and very involved with people. As a young adult, I had a husband and two children, work I was excited about, and a close community of friends. I remember talking with others about how we felt, as if we were living several lives at once due to our constant busyness. I marveled that boredom was a problem for some people. I couldn't even grasp the concept.

I was living in Baltimore during this intense and hectic period. Slowly, I began to feel that my life was closing in on me. Too many people, too many activities. All very worthwhile, but too much. Suddenly there was a light shining through the tunnel. My husband had an opportunity for a job in far-off Maine. A longed-for dream to move to the country was coming true. With great sadness, but also a sense of relief, I bade farewell to all the people and activities that had been my life in Baltimore.

My first year in Maine was remarkably quiet. I entered the energy of Water.

Before I left Baltimore, I had applied to acupuncture school, and I had to wait a year to begin my studies. Rather than pursue some kind of work, I stayed home, played with my young son, waited at the end of the driveway when the school bus dropped my daughter off, and was supportive of my husband as he adjusted to a new job. I walked in the woods. I gathered apples.

For the next 15 years, the pace of my life steadily increased. I became an acupuncturist, worked extremely hard, and traveled frequently, both to learn and to teach. Gradually I developed another wonderful circle of friends. Once again busy-ness had become a way of life. Again I felt trapped. I had expanded into life so fully that there was no room for my quiet side. I was out of balance.

I had been living in a way that is typical for our culture, more involved in the yang energies than the yin. I did plenty of growing and planning and birthing new ideas, as in the Wood element. I loved the spurt of energy, the rapid growth of the springtime. I was also experiencing the benefits of the summertime Fire element, blossoming fully in my life, expanding into my work, my parenting, my partnership with my husband.

*I valued "more" rather than "less." I gave myself births and cheated myself of the teachings of the deaths.*

But I was often missing the more yin aspects of the cycle. I did not have enough access to my late summer Earth element energy. I didn't take the time to digest and harvest all that I was doing, nor to feel gratitude for my bounty. Neither did I embrace the letting-go quality of the autumn Metal element. I valued "more" rather than "less." I gave myself births and cheated myself of the teachings of the deaths.

And, finally, I didn't enter the wondrous realms of the Water element, for when my life was predicated on the joys of accomplishment, it was easy to forget the happiness of stillness. The culture validates me for activity, I found, while giving little support—and often condemnation—for doing "nothing." Overdoing, overworking, and overspending have been institutionalized.

For years I had practiced meditation on a regular basis. While this was a dipping into the Water energy, it was not enough to balance my busy-ness. Then, six years ago, without quite knowing what I was getting into, I went to a month-long meditation retreat. Each year since, I have returned. Gradually, by spending this much time in an environment that supports the Water in me, my life is changing. I am slowing down, making better choices. I have more to offer to my family, my patients, my community, and, most important, myself. And this offering to myself *is* an offering to my community.

Even though I know thoroughly the benefits of this special retreat time, every fall when it comes time for me to go, I get terrified. I don't want to go. It feels like leaping off a cliff, and I have no idea where I will land. I hate the pain I must descend through in order to come to a deeper place of knowledge about myself and the cosmos.

It's scary to dive into the depths of the Water energy. And I go anyhow, because I have come to know that by going through this process of retreat, I develop greater trust in who I am and what the universe is. I experience—in my body and spirit, not only in my intellect—that out of the long, dark winter, there does indeed come a springtime filled with freshness.

When I speak about my month of meditation, often people want to know, "What do you *do* with all that time?" I receive what arises from within me, including fear, anger, jealousy—all of it. I come to know that underneath the turmoil of life is a simplicity in which

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—Sources: Federal Accounting Office, Worldwatch Institute, Environmental Defense Fund

we are all the same. I feel compassion for myself, and compassion for all suffering. Spending a month in the depths of Water helps me throughout the year to remember, and to revisit periodically, that slowed-down, deeper place.

Not everyone will want to explore the Water energies in the intensive way I am choosing. Yet I have come to believe that if our planet is to survive, all of us must find our own ways to slow down, to be in the stillness.

Health is about balance. We must return to balance in whatever way we can. ❖

[Originally published in the Winter '94 issue of *Meridians*, published by the Traditional Acupuncture Institute.]

*Vicki Cohn Pollard practices acupuncture in Blue Hill, Maine. She is Clinical Director for the Worsley Institute of Classical Acupuncture.*

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## In My Ganges (for Fred)

*Browsing by her banks at dawn,  
Sifting through the Hello Madams  
Selling silks and broken-bottomed boat-rides.  
I catch the Holy Ones all saffroned-robbed:*

*Tangled hair, coat of ash  
Spackled red upon three eyes*

*Go pushy into Mother Ganga  
Without regard to carcasses and scents.*

*Standing, rooted  
While those purifying waters stream upon them  
Bubbling up through ashen pores  
All the sins and sickness of this life and past.*

*Just so I stand in my great river  
Of my past deeds and momentary  
Sights and thoughts and sounds.*

*Feet firmly planted,  
While they all  
Rush and tumble by.  
Me: unmoving,  
Half a smile.  
I greet this river kindly*

*Then let it slide between my fingers  
Legs and toes,  
And watch my skirt turn saffron.*

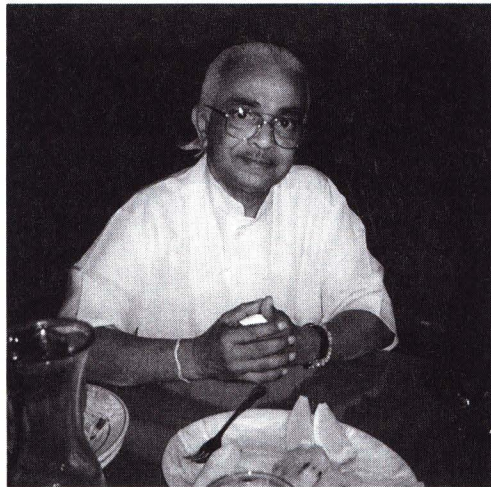
—Diana Winston

# GET IN THE WATER TO LEARN HOW TO SWIM

## A Conversation with Dr. A. T. Ariyaratne of the Sarvodaya Movement

BASE (Buddhist Alliance for Social Engagement) Coordinator Diana Winston and BPF Board Member Petra McWilliams interviewed Dr. Ariyaratne of Sri Lanka while having lunch at a Thai restaurant during the Chicago conference on socially engaged Buddhism and Christianity in July 1996. Diana reports:

*Meeting Dr. A. T. Ariyaratne was one of the high points of the conference for me. Ari founded the Sarvodaya Shramadana movement, a 40-year-old Buddhist-based social liberation movement. Over 10,000 villages in Sri Lanka today have been touched by Sarvodaya. For me, Ari is engaged Buddhism in the flesh. He combines in himself a love for the dharma, the suttas, and the tenets of Buddhist philosophy with a brilliant global vision. And yet this small man is so unassuming. He speaks with humility and compassion combined with the sword-like wisdom of Manjusri that cuts through all the muck.*



Dr. A. T. Ariyaratne

**Petra:** Sarvodaya is a rural village movement in Sri Lanka. Can the Sarvodaya model be applied to the problems in the U.S., particularly in inner cities?

**Ari:** A basic mistake we make is that we look to an outside model to decide if we can do something or not. You should not look outside—you should look inside and ask yourself: Do I need to do it, or should I do it? What will be the benefit for myself or others? And then immediately you will get the insight as to how to do it in any environment.

Today people are wanting to swim without getting in the water. But I believe that in any environment, individuals with inner spiritual motivation and right determination can do whatever needs to be done to make a better society. Just do it and then forget about it!

**Diana:** Do you think that American Buddhists should also be activists, or should we be focusing more on meditation practice?

**Ari:** I personally do not like to divide people into activists, meditators, writers, and such. First, I believe that all of us should use all of these approaches in varying degrees according to our own personality. Everybody

should live in a meditative mode all of the time, although some people have the capacity to meditate more than others. Second, everybody should get into service or activism. But simply carrying a flag and shouting in the street—if that is activism, I don't think it's of much use unless there's a spiritual motivation.

There are three kinds of changes we need to make. First there is a philosophical change that is necessary. We realize we have to act for others. Second, there is the methodology: we have to simplify life. When you are trying to live luxuriously, then life becomes too complicated and you have no time for any other thing. The third change has to do with the impurities within ourselves. Because of our luxurious and wasteful lifestyles, society is plagued with evil structures—social, economic and political—and we need to change them.

**Diana:** Yes but, aren't our luxurious lifestyles a result of these structures?

**Ari:** Of course, it goes both ways. Essentially, we need to make change in three sectors: ideologically, or mind, methodologically or how you do things, and structural—how we are organized socially, politically economically, or otherwise. This is what we do in Sarvodaya.

**Diana:** In the U. S. we have set up BASE as a training program. And I wonder what kind of training happens in Sarvodaya? Are workers mostly helping to build bridges and houses, or are teachings also given? Could you describe a typical program?

**Ari:** We train our workers in nutrition, health care, bringing up children, credit savings, micro-enterprises. We have a whole range of training programs designed to improve the quality of life of the people, including meditation.

**Diana:** Are you teaching meditation to the villagers or to the volunteers?

**Ari:** Both.

**Diana:** Do you have monastic or lay teachers?

**Ari:** Both. We make use of all that is present in a given

environment. At our central headquarters we have good facilities for training. We also have 32 district centers where we do educational training, eight special training institutions, 345 divisional centers, and training programs in every work camp. And of course, every activity in the village is a kind of training.

**Diana:** What is the importance of building community and *kalyana mitta* (spiritual friendships) in Sarvodaya?

**Ari:** We must do this work in community. Two or more people can come together for mutual enjoyment of sensory pleasures or they can come together for constructive work. People can come together for alcohol and cigarettes. But they can also come together based on spirituality and moral values, to meditate or to serve people in need, or to discuss problems in society.

**Diana:** That's what the Buddha said was the most important piece of the path—spiritual friendship.

**Ari:** Yes, yes.

**Diana:** How hierarchical is the organization of Sarvodaya? Is it top-down or is it more democratic?

**Ari:** It's very democratic. Sarvodaya operates in each village under certain rules and regulations, and is run by a democratically elected committee. When a village reaches a certain development stage, it becomes an

independent society, run by the villagers themselves. We have over 2300 independent societies in the Sarvodaya movement.

We are not paid. We are mostly volunteers, although we do have some paid staff led by an executive director and others.

**Diana:** What about gender balance? Do women have power in the organization?

**Ari:** A majority of the people involved with Sarvodaya are women.

**Petra:** Really? That's great! Why?

**Ari:** That's what happened. Men didn't believe we could do this!

**Petra:** I understand there is a Sarvodaya USA. What are they doing?

**Ari:** A small group of people in the United States who have had exposure to Sarvodaya got together recently and formed an organization. It's growing fast. They want to help in two ways: they want to see how Sarvodaya ideas can benefit people in this country, in whatever small way. At the same time, they want to support us in Sri Lanka in whatever way they can. It's still in its infancy.

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**Petra:** I work for a really large Buddhist organization, the Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition (FPMT), with centers, healing places, and hospices all over the world. Often I think that my teacher set up these different environments so that those of us running them would have a way to practice. Maybe we help someone get healed, but I think the main point is our own practice. We are not so comfortable sitting on cushions, but we are comfortable serving in these centers. If you see service as practice you don't get so caught up and so attached to the fruits of the service.

**Diana:** I think one of the biggest hindrances to service, particularly for Westerners, is egotism and pride. We think we're really doing something. For example, "I" am setting up the BASE program and "I" feel good about it. How can I work on pride?

**Ari:** You should get joy and happiness out of what you are doing all the time. Then pride just goes away.

**Diana:** Don't you have people coming up to you and saying, "thank you, thank you" all the time? Isn't that hard to swallow?

**Ari:** It is very difficult. It took me a long time. When people recognize you for what you are doing, naturally you have a tendency to be self-righteous. We have to work on this.

**Petra:** This morning you spoke of antidotes to discouragement. You said you renew yourself by walking in the garden and visiting little children. You have been doing this work for 40 years, and I'm thinking about a long-term view. How do you deal with the sense of despair that comes when change seems impossible?

**Ari:** Discouragement comes to me when the people I've helped are enticed away by money from those who oppose our work, and they leave us. It's like having a ladder kicked from under you, and then you are very pained. But my will comes back. I feel it is karma. What can I do? I feel very sorry for them because a few years later I see them and they are very sad people. They haven't got what they went after.

**Petra:** Recently Diana and I were talking about the benefits of relieving suffering through social service and action versus relieving suffering by teaching people the dharma and leading them to liberation. What do you think of this in terms of where to put one's energy?

**Ari:** Look at the Buddha. For billions and billions of years and world cycles he was aspiring to be a supreme Buddha. How did he do it? He did it through service to all beings. When you serve all beings, sometimes you have to give away everything, including your life, your eyes, your limbs, everything. For the *paramitas* (compassion, patience, morality, kindness, etc.) to be fulfilled, you have to serve the world.

And while you do that kind of activity outside, you don't do it like a machine, you do it with mindfulness, which means with meditation. Meditation is not simply sitting down somewhere and closing your eyes. If you train your mind every evening and morning, at whatever is a convenient time for you, you reach a point where you can meditate anywhere—while driving a car, while eating your food. Mindfulness has become a part of your life. When you go on and on serving with mindfulness, there comes a time when you understand at a deep level that everything is changing every moment. Then your thoughts become pure thoughts, your words become good words, and your deeds become wholesome.

Right understanding, right thoughts, right words, right deeds, and then, right livelihood: find work that supports your understanding. Then develop right effort: purify your mind. That leads you to concentration. This concentration helps you to understand the *dukkha sacca* (the noble truth of suffering), the cause and cessation of suffering, and the way to the cessation of suffering. That is the eightfold noble path for each person to follow. This has to be completed without thinking of time. You have to do it without a timetable, without wasting a moment.

As you can see, both meditation practice and your engagement in society can proceed very smoothly. That is what Buddha did in his past lives, and we should follow in his footsteps.

**Diana:** In the way you just described the eightfold path, it sounded like meditation and service are for someone who has the means to help out. If you have privilege you can help; you can work on *sila* (morality) and *dana* (generosity) and ultimately on mindfulness practice. But what about people who don't have anything?

**Ari:** Take me as an example. I do not have anything. Let me live so that people can benefit from what I am doing. First thing is, give compassion. You can do something physical—give the gift of labor. Around us there are so many who are illiterate or less educated; you can give them something. Anybody can start—you

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don't need to be in a privileged position. Then, of course, it starts coming back to you. Like I said earlier, you have to get in the water to learn how to swim.

**Diana:** Do some of the people you work with become teachers for others? If you are working in a poor village, do some of the people you help with food and housing then turn around and work in other villages?

**Ari:** Oh, yes, that's the whole idea. Some of them will definitely turn around and help other villages. And once in a while, some people will be destructive instead! But if somebody doesn't do violent actions now and then, we can't practice *paramitas*!

**Diana:** What is Sarvodaya's situation now? I understand that money you received from some of the northern development funds backfired. Can you speak about that?

**Ari:** For the first 17 years, Sarvodaya was completely independent. There were donations, but without conditions. And from 1987 onwards, major donors from a donor consortium promised that they would look after our financial needs, so we were very happy.

But about three years ago, the donors started making demands. They didn't respect our philosophy. We had a lot of disagreements, and finally some donors withdrew. Others cut their aid by 25 percent. Today we have to manage with about 15 percent of what we got three years ago.

We had to get rid of thousands of motivated, well-trained people. At the moment, we are trying to get back to where we were in 1987. Now we are going all out to establish an endowment fund, so we don't any longer have to be dictated to by anybody. In a way, it was good that all this happened.

**Diana:** What role has Sarvodaya played in relation to the civil war in your country?

**Ari:** First Sarvodaya tried to prevent the war from happening. In 1959 we were getting all the communities to work together to promote nonviolence. When conflict started, we designed a five-part program. It included 1) healing the victims of war, 2) rehabilitating victims psychologically and socially, 3) helping to reconstruct villages, 4) doing reconciliation, through peace walks, discussions, and peace meditations, and finally, 5) bringing these villages into our normal 10,000-village program.

Later on, donors cut money for this plan, supposedly because our headquarters are in the South, whereas the fighting is in the North. Others felt that Sarvodaya, which is primarily Sinhalese, should not do work for the Tamils. Actually, most people do not know that our aid for the peace work was cut. We could do much relief and reconciliation work if we had the resources to do it.

**Diana:** It's great to hear that there is something concrete people can contribute to from the U.S. and abroad.

**Ari:** Yes, with unrestricted money we can do it. We are ready to risk our lives to bring about peace and rebuild people's confidence.

**Diana:** So what's the future? Where is Sarvodaya heading?

**Ari:** When it comes, we will know.

**Diana:** I guess that wasn't a Buddhist question.

**Ari:** Stay in the moment. We were hungry, we came running to this restaurant, we are no longer hungry. We had to do this interview, there was time, and we did it. ❖

Those interested in Sarvodaya USA should contact Judy and Steve West at 153 Fourth St., St. James, NY 11780. E-mail: [stevodaya@aol.com](mailto:stevodaya@aol.com)

*Diana Winston is the founding coordinator of BASE, and practices Vipassana meditation. She loves to mix theory with practice.*

*Petra McWilliams is the Co-Director of FPMT (Foundation for the Preservation of Mahayana Teachings) International Office, and a BPF Board member. She is a long-time practitioner of Tibetan Buddhism.*

## Water

*Born of water,  
little space inside  
for anything else;  
crying a daily prayer  
repeated to relieve  
the pressure.*

*Accepted the tears,  
no damned floodgates,  
weeping and resting  
two sides of the cycle,  
nothing absolute  
in between.*

*Longing to be  
airborne, earthbound,  
born from embers  
of a flame; could  
howl, could rumble,  
could devour;*

*instead  
I am made  
of rain.*

—Donna Kaz

# ROBERT AITKEN'S RETIREMENT CEREMONY

by Susan Moon

In the Palolo zendo, up the hill from Honolulu, a woman came forward and sat on the mat before Aitken Roshi. Behind him, a fan of flames rose from the altar. No, not flames after all, but bright red Hawai'ian flowers in a vase. Eye to eye, just a few feet apart, teacher and student looked at each other, and Roshi waited for whatever she had to say. I saw that she was weeping. "I just wanted to sit with you one more time like this," she said.

"I am always sitting with you," said Roshi.

They bowed to each other. She rose and returned to her seat, leaving the mat for the next questioner.

I was lucky enough to go to Hawai'i in December of '96 to represent BPF at Aitken Roshi's retirement ceremony, along with my BPF colleague, Alan Senauke. At age 79, Aitken was retiring as head teacher of the Honolulu Diamond Sangha, the lay Zen community he founded in 1959 with his late wife Anne Hopkins. He has just moved to the Big Island, to live next door to his son Tom, and to continue his writing and scholarship. Nelson Foster, teacher at Ring of Bone and Aitken's long-time student, is his successor.

Aitken Roshi was one of the founders of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship. His concern for how we express our intention to save all sentient beings has been an inspiration: his explorations have included tax resistance, civil disobedience, international networking, Buddhist/Christian dialogue. In part because of his long-term interest in the idea of base communities and engaged anarchism, and because he tirelessly brought these ideas before us, BPF now has a thriving BASE program (Buddhist Alliance for Social Engagement). As an elder, as an advisory board member, he has kept us going. I remember with particular gratitude his part at the second BPF summer institute several years ago, when every morning, after meditation and before a day of meetings about saving the world, he threaded us and our days together with a dharma talk on each one of the six paramitas.

The night before the ceremony, Palolo Zen Center hosted a dinner for out-of-town visitors in a Honolulu restaurant aptly named the Buddhist Vegetarian Restaurant. There must have been 60 of us there, from many parts of the world, including Australia, Japan,

Europe, and the mainland U.S., all of us come to honor Robert Aitken. I sat next to an enthusiastic young woman who had recently come from San Diego to practice Zen with the renowned Aitken. She flew to Honolulu, took a bus to Palolo Valley, and began walking up the road, her sleeping back on her back. When she saw a big Buddhist temple, she went inside and began to meditate. Nobody came, but she figured this was the entry ritual. She sat for hours before she figured out that she was in the wrong place, or at least not the place she meant to be. In the morning she walked further up the road until she came to Palolo Zen Center. She arrived just in time to sit rohatsu sesshin and then attend the retirement ceremony of the teacher she had come to study with. Somehow a very Zen story.

After a 12-course meal that included a whole fish made out of *poi*, several people toasted Aitken Roshi informally. Michael Wenger of San Francisco Zen Center recalled the time he wrote to Roshi asking, "What is Zen training?" and Roshi answered, "Mind your own business and floss every day."

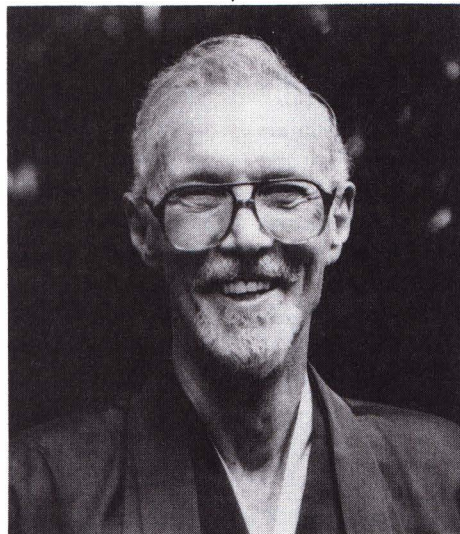
The formal ceremony took place on Sunday morning. In the open-air zendo, Aitken Roshi sat facing us all, and after we chanted the heart sutra, a dozen people from different parts of Aitken Roshi's life spoke in tribute to him, including an ACLU activist, an editor, a critic, a professor, a politician, a Buddhist Bishop, and Roshi's son Tom. I spoke on behalf of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship. What a multi-faceted life! Zen teacher, scholar, writer, and activist. It was a pleasure to watch Roshi's face as he listened to all those people praising him.

After the ceremony, there was a festive buffet lunch. Roshi stood in a reception line, glowing, a fresh lei around his neck, while people hugged him and took pictures of him. A Hawai'ian band played on the veranda, and some people danced.

On the morning of my departure I went snorkeling at Hanauma Bay. Just under the surface, another universe: riotously colored fish feeding in the quivering light. Easy to see that *they* were jewels in the Net of Indra! A sea turtle floated beneath me, like a cloud. This, too, was part of Aitken Roshi's retirement ceremony.

Writing about right speech in one of his many articles in *TW*, Roshi said, "Crossing to the other shore is our work, and nobody can say, 'I have accomplished it.' There are milestones on the path, but they are only milestones and are not any kind of consummation. There on the rock by the waterfall Kuan-yin is constantly getting new ideas."

You, too, Roshi. ❖



## *Bare-Bones Meditation: Waking Up from the Story of My Life*

by Joan Tollifson

Belltower, 1996, \$13

### Reviewed by Anita Barrows

"Is there a way for the two realms to meet, wholeness and particularity?" Joan Tollifson asks about a third of the way through *Bare-Bones Meditation*. Every page of this book could be understood as a meditation on this question. Part memoir, part journal-style inquiry, Tollifson's book is rooted in paradox; even what she calls the "central theme" of her being is an absence—the right hand she was born without. And, as her subtitle implies, Tollifson is continually turning inside out the story of her life, as she presents it to the reader in undefended, often luminous detail. The result is that we come to see the narratives we tell ourselves about ourselves as similar in essence to reflections on water—shapes whose "reality" we know is nonexistent, yet which are distinct and shimmeringly present.

"Different, asymmetrical, imperfect, special," Tollifson says of herself, the self defined during childhood, signified by her missing hand. Though it caused her to be shunned, she was aware early on that it also afforded her "a passport to the marginal worlds, to the realms of the dispossessed." A spiritual child in a household of agnostics, a civil rights warrior in a Republican suburb, Tollifson's physical difference was emblematic of the ways in which she began quite early to feel herself set apart from her surroundings. Like the French writer Jean Genet, whom she quotes, her path to the sacred was through the wormy underside: drug dealing, alcoholism, violent drunken rages, misdirected loves. Eventually she discovered therapy, political activism, and (via Issan Dorsey, who seemed a kindred spirit) Zen.

Always there was a voice in her that posited the opposite of whatever she was hearing—or saying. After a period of deep commitment to a radical leftist group, she saw "more and more clearly that despite our good intentions, [we were] becoming the very thing we thought we were fighting against." Having lived some months at the Berkeley Zen Center, she began dreaming that there were Latin dancers in the meditation hall and Zen priests singing in their black robes. She found herself impatient with the very sparseness and discipline that had first drawn her. She left the center, took a degree in creative writing, began doing co-counseling. Her story was the story of so many women in our time: multiple choices, multiple directions, identities put on, then torn off in pain and frustration, exposing raw, sensitive skin. Then she encountered Toni Packer.

"Listening to Toni's talks, I realized that the whole story of 'me' is imaginary, that 'I' exist as a separate, discrete individual only when I think of myself."

Tollifson did a retreat at Springwater, Packer's center in upstate New York, and moved in as part of the staff. There, in Toni's presence, Tollifson's inner dialectic proceeded: Do the labels we give things clarify or annihilate them? Does identifying as part of a particular group—lesbians, disabled people—and acting on behalf of that group lead to division, to reductionism? Is Toni really opposed to activist engagement? Is it really enough to touch the "pure sorrow" of the oppressed, as Toni seems at times to be suggesting?

Tollifson struggles (or doesn't struggle!) through the major part of this book to grasp Toni's meaning, to apply it to her life. She alternately agrees with Toni and vehemently resists. Does Toni's teaching invalidate the ideals and affiliations on which Tollifson based her life? In her honest and self-revealing explorations of Toni's teaching and her reactions to it, Tollifson keeps reaching toward that place of contradiction that both reveals the beauty of subjective detail and acknowledges its emptiness.

Tollifson's writing stirred up in me my own questions about Toni Packer's teaching. I was pulled right in to the incessant challenging of beliefs and impressions that Tollifson and Packer engage in. At various moments Tollifson arrives at quite different conclusions. Increasingly she surrenders herself to the process, and she induces the reader to do so as well; our expectation of things like "development" and "change" in Joan's life story falls away.

And, of course, there *is* development, there *is* change. Though at times I found my patience waning as Tollifson wrote of her doubts about the "reality" of experiences she was describing at length, it is clear that she accepts both sides of that paradox. Convinced of the wholeness, she grows also to be convinced of the value of the particular—of story, of *her* story: "I suspect that it was absolutely crucial that I explored my identity as a woman, a lesbian, and a disabled person before I got to Toni." She asks, "Do we need to give careful attention to the text we call the self before it can become transparent?"

Joan Tollifson addresses some very critical questions of our existence, and she does so with openness, humor, and an eye for nuance. *Bare-Bones Meditation* is an adventure in removing the veils—and in holding each one, and the face it obscures (and then reveals) with tenderness and attention. ❖

*Anita Barrows is a poet, translator, essayist, and clinical psychologist. Her most recent publication is a collaboration with Joanna Macy on a translation of Rilke's Book of Hours (Riverhead, 1996). She is a longtime Vipassana practitioner and a beginning Tibetan practitioner.*

# ONCE UPON A TIME...

## *A survey of Buddhist books for kids of all ages*

by Rafe Martin

Twenty-six years ago, when our son Jake was eight weeks old (“Eight for the old-fold Path,” said Delancey Kapleau, peering into Jake’s snugli), my wife Rose and I moved to Rochester, New York, to begin Zen practice with Roshi Philip Kapleau. Zen training, parenting, and a search for good children’s books, especially Buddhist books, all started up at the same time for us. Four years later our daughter Ariya was born. In time we opened a bookstore. Later I became a storyteller and then an author of a growing number of children’s books, some of them Buddhist. Which is what lies behind this brief survey of Buddhist books for children: tales set in Buddhist settings with Buddhist characters, retellings of the Buddha’s life story, tales of the Buddha and tales *by* the Buddha—Jataka tales that Buddha himself, according to tradition, told of his own earlier births, often in animal form. (Such tales, by the way, are part of the traditional Buddhist canon and not mere “kiddie-lit.”)

There is a danger. The life of the Buddha, especially when written for children, can all too easily slip into a kind of sugary-sweet religious idealism. (How much of our own desire for religious perfection do we project onto the Buddha and his own demanding life road?) What do perfect literary-religious role models do for—and to—us? (Perhaps Vajrayana, Vipassana, and Pure Land students will have a different “take” on this than those in Zen, for whom the beautifully scathing ironies of Mumon and other old Zen teachers remain refreshing fare.) When I look for a Buddhist children’s book, I look, above all, for good storytelling. If it speaks to the imagination and does so without pietism, overly biblical language, or cloying sweetness, it will be the book I’m drawn to share.

This article, then, is a survey of such books—for children and their parents and for young adults, listed in alphabetical order by author. Several of my own books appear here, as they have begun to form a significant part of the growing body of Buddhist literature now available for children. Rather than recommending them I’ve simply noted what reviewers have said about them.

### **For young children and their parents**

When my children were growing up, we read aloud almost every night, our closing ritual to the day. Those moments remain among our deepest, sweetest family memories.

We read all kinds of things, and sometimes we edited as we went, changing a word or phrase to bring the story more into line with the thinking and age and language experience of our children. We “tailor-read” the tale, stitching and hemming and altering as we went. Please exercise your own parental right to judicious on-the-spot editing. Make the story your family’s own. Some authors may howl, but as an author I say do it, if it will make the story work better for your children. That’s the point, after all. And you should have some joy in sharing it, too.

*The Cat Who Went to Heaven.* Elizabeth Coatsworth. Illustrated by Lynd Ward. Macmillan, 1928. I’m grateful to Elizabeth Coatsworth for her elegant retelling of the life of the Buddha and several Jatakas in her story of a poor Japanese artist commissioned to paint the Buddha’s Parinirvana. The ending is mysterious, otherworldly, yet tinged with sadness. The cat dies. So, parents, be aware that some emotional fall-out may remain. Still, it’s “one of the 30 twentieth-century children’s books every adult should know” (Horn Book). Winner of the Newberry Medal.

*Buddha.* Demi. Holt, 1996. A beautiful picture book by an artist, very classically Asian in illustration and tone, ending with a promise of “heaven” for those who follow the teachings. Alas. Except for that and for a section about Devadatta having “broken the law which states, ‘Anyone who harms a Buddha will die a violent death’” (and on the next page he does!), this is a lovely piece of work. If you’re troubled, too, exercise your parental right to judicious rewording or editing.

Dharma Publishing began producing a series of Jataka tales in paperback more than 20 years ago. Their well-known series continues to grow today, reflecting a dedicated effort to pass these stories on to young children. All are clear and accessible. All are in paperback, some are in coloring-book format, and many come with dramatized readings on cassette. Also from Dharma, for older readers is *A Treasury of Wise Action*, 22 Jatakas retold for readers ages nine through twelve. And *Hero of the Land of Snows*, a retelling of the heroic epic of Gesar, the Tibetan Buddhist “once and future king.”

*Orange-Robed Boy.* Patricia Wallace Garlan, Maryjane Dunstan. Paintings by Pau Oo Thet. Viking Press, 1967. Out-of-print but worth finding, this story of a boy in Burma having to choose between life in the

*The life of the Buddha, especially when written for children, can all too easily slip into a kind of sugary-sweet religious idealism.*

monastery and life as a lay Buddhist in the world is sensitively written and beautifully illustrated.

*Mountains of Tibet.* Written and illustrated by Mordecai Gerstein. Harper & Row, 1987. A delightfully unique picture book inspired by *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*. Gerstein is a wonderful children's author-illustrator and he here shows how skillfully he can explore deep themes within the picture-book format. This is a book that neither adults nor children should pass up.

*Tintin in Tibet.* Hergé. Little Brown, 1962. My children learned to read on "Tintins," the life-work of Swiss master-cartoonist and storyteller, Hergé. *Tintin in Tibet* is a compassionate, adventurous tale with richly detailed Buddhist elements. And it's a visual delight.

*The Golden Deer.* Told by Margaret Hodges. Illustrated by Daniel Sans Souci. Scribner's, 1992. One of the nicest picture book versions of a Jataka tale around. This clear and graceful retelling is accompanied by warm, expressive illustrations. A definite for sharing with children.

*Twenty Jataka Tales.* Noor Inayat Khan. East-West Publications, 1975. The most elegant edition of Jatakas, gently told (each of the stories ends "and they all lived happy ever after") and simply but beautifully illustrated. Noor Inayat Khan, daughter of the Sufi Teacher Hazrat Inayat Khan, died for the Resistance in occupied France. A classic.

*Prince Siddhartha, the Story of Buddha.* Jonathan Laidlaw and Janet Brooke. Wisdom Publications, 1984. This most complete retelling of the life of the Buddha for children has moments of genuine presence and offers enough detail for readers to really feel that they know the Buddha personally by the end. The telling of the early life of the Buddha perhaps overemphasizes his "specialness," but the rich depth of the story is quite sensitively presented.

*Brave Little Parrot.* Told by Rafe Martin. Illustrated by Susan Gaber. G.P. Putnam's Sons, Spring 1998. A picture-book version of a Jataka tale of deep compassion. Do the one little thing you can to douse the flames of this world, this tale says, and it might change everything.

*Foolish Rabbit's Big Mistake.* Rafe Martin. G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1985. A retelling of a classic Jataka tale with illustrations by Caldecott-winning illustrator Ed Young. "Quite glorious...especially well-suited for story hour," said *Booklist*. An American Library Association Notable Book of the Year.

*The Hungry Tigress.* Rafe Martin. Parallax Press, 1990. The largest collection of Jatakas retold for contemporary readers. Its 40 stories include a life of the Buddha as well as Buddhist legends, Jataka tales, and teaching tales, some appropriate for children, others for older readers and adults. All have an oral, "told-tale" feel.

Includes commentaries. Look for a new edition with a new publisher in 1997-98.

*Monkey Bridge.* Told by Rafe Martin. Illustrated by Fahimeh Amiri. Alfred A. Knopf, Spring 1997. A picture-book version of a classic Jataka tale in which a human king learns wisdom and compassion from an animal—the Buddha in an earlier birth.

*One Hand Clapping: Zen Stories for All Ages.* Retold by Rafe Martin and Manuela Soares. Illustrated by Junko Morimoto. Rizzoli, 1996. Zen stories full of paradox, earthy wisdom, and mystery. "Gracefully compiled and beautifully designed, this is a one-of-a-kind book. All ages."—*Publishers Weekly*.

*The Buddha's Question.* W.W. Rowe. Snow Lion, 1994. A retelling of a Jataka tale from Thich Nhat Hanh's *Old Path White Clouds*, in rhymed couplets. The Buddha is a tree who sees a heron trick—and devour—a school of fish. The heron gets his just reward. If the story ended there I'd say let it go by. It's a cautionary fable, not a compassion tale. However, the tale shifts to the vow that the tree makes and how that has led to Buddhahood. This brings a whole other level of imagination into play.

*Zen ABC.* Amy Zerner and Jessie Spicer Zerner. Tuttle, 1993. "No way?" you say. "Way!" It's a charmer with exciting, graceful collage illustrations accompanied by haiku or other, essentially Zen words. "J" is for Joshu's Dog, "E," Enlightenment. Any questions?

#### For older children and young adults

The Buddha's life, with its deeply mythic elements—the recognition of impermanence and suffering, the determination to do something about it, the home-leaving, the challenges of Mara, the triumph of Enlightenment—can make absorbing reading for this age group. Here are some titles you may find interesting.

*The Awakened One.* Sherab Chozdin Cohen. Shambhala, 1994. Complete yet tightly knit. The whole story. Good bibliography.

*Old Path White Clouds.* Thich Nhat Hanh. Parallax Press, 1991. A very poetic retelling, woven through with stories and richly imagined characters. Its length may be daunting for younger readers, but there's lots here to be shared.

*The Life of Buddha.* A.F. Herold. Tuttle, 1954. Romantic, somewhat dated, "...and yet...and yet."

*The Hungry Tigress.* Rafe Martin. Parallax Press, 1990. See entry under previous section (for young children and their parents).

Milarepa's dramatic and inspiring life story can make compelling reading for a young adult. A fall from wealth

through treachery prompts a revenge based on sorcery; a recognition of impermanence leads, through agonizing trials, to hard practice and Buddhahood. Evans-Wentz's *Tibet's Great Yogi Milarepa*, Oxford, 1928, is richly conceived, biblical in tone; Lobsang Lhalungpa's *The Life of Milarepa*, Dutton, 1977, is more modern. The brilliantly visual comic-strip novel by artist Eva Van Dam, *The Magic Life of Milarepa, Tibet's Great Yogi*, Shambhala, 1991, may be the best place to begin. It's a large format comic book. Since it includes some semi-nudity, young adults may be especially intrigued.

*Tulku*. Peter Dickenson. Dutton, 1979. A fine, strong novel for young adults. The tale has power. Dickenson is a noted author with genuine gifts for language and storytelling, and his research into Tibetan culture and religion is solid. The female lead seems inspired by spiritual explorer Alexandra David-Neel. Try your library, since it may be out of print.

*Mysterious Tales of Japan*. Told by Rafe Martin. Illustrated by Tatsuro Kiuchi. G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1996. Showing strong Buddhist influence, these eerie and elegant tales are especially suitable for upper elementary through adult readers. "A journey into a moral landscape of great power and subtlety."—*Los Angeles Times Sunday Book Review*

*Mipam*. Lama Yongden. Translated by Percy Lloyd. Snow Lion Graphics, 1986 and SUNY Press (Albany), 1987. This is a Tibetan Buddhist novel written, with help, by Alexandra David-Neel's adopted son, Lama Yongden, to reveal the truth of Buddhist Tibet to the Western world. It contains stunning images and fine storytelling. However, its heart of compassion—which is deep—gets a bit of a short shrift at the end, when a central female character receives her prophecy of male birth. Some parents (and young readers) may object to the whiff of sexism here. But, as the tale of a child tulku who must first grow up and find his way in the world before he is "found," it is a great and compelling story.

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I've come to trust that tales of deep imagination and heart can help reawaken in us an innate potential in which the truth of Buddhism is the truth of our own Nature. The old Zen teachers used folktales and popular songs to clarify and reveal the teachings. They knew that what they sought was already there. The world's tradition of tales that dramatize this ancient Way is accessible to us today as perhaps never before.

So, if you are at a loss for a good book for kids, try almost anything that starts, "Once upon a time ..." And, to paraphrase an old teacher, "Enter there." ❖

*Author and storyteller Rafe Martin lives in Rochester, N.Y. He is the author of a dozen books and is the editor, along with Polly Young-Eisendrath, of the forthcoming Awakening to Zen: The Teachings of Roshi Philip Kapleau (Scribners, Spring 1997).*

## *The Roaring Stream: A New Zen Reader*

edited by Nelson Foster & Jack Shoemaker

The Ecco Press, 1996, \$27.50 (hardcover)

### Reviewed by Alan Senauke

The stream of Zen runs for thousands of miles and 1500 years. We have some wonderful books of history and recorded sayings, but until now, no single volume has attempted to convey the breadth of this tradition in meaningful chunks of the old teachers' own words. That is the task that Nelson Foster and Jack Shoemaker have taken on here, and they succeed gloriously in these 46 selections: from Bodhidharma, who brought "wall gazing" from India to sixth-century China, all the way to the prolific, free-spirited poet-monk Ryokan, who passed away in early nineteenth-century Japan. In between are most of the key figures of Chan and Zen, of the Soto, Rinzai, and Obaku Schools, monks and poets, lay and ordained: Great Teachers Hui-neng, Chao-chou, Tung-shan, Yun-men, Dogen, Bankei, Hakuin, Layman P'ang and his family; poets Wang Wei, Po Chu-i, Su T'ung-po, Basho, and many more.

It is a stretch to say this anthology is "engaged Buddhism." Yet the qualities of compassion, thoroughgoing effort, and all-inclusive mind that run so deep in Zen are the very qualities that have helped create a modern-day movement of socially engaged Buddhism. And co-editor Nelson Foster, one of BPF's founders, often underscores these connections in his brief but interpretive and often witty introductions to each section.

In the months since *The Roaring Stream's* publication, I have gone back again and again for stories, and for the style of particular Zen teachers. The dharma itself has just the one flavor of liberation. But each of our ancestors has his or her own character and voice.

The old poet monk Ryokan was known for removing lice from his breast, warming them in the sun, and replacing them in his robes. They include his poem:

*Fleas, lice  
any autumn bug that  
wants to sing—  
the breast of my robe  
is Musashino moor!*

(Musashino was an elegant Kyoto beauty spot.)

I wish there was space here to share with you more of their distinctive words. In this volume they come through, elegant or rough-hewn, direct or enigmatic, urging us to find our own liberation by any means possible. This is the treasure of Zen, and of the good work that Nelson Foster and Jack Shoemaker offer us.

I recommend reading this book one ancestor, one voice, at a time, maybe before going to bed, savoring the teachings in your dreams. The Zen record is largely an oral tradition, so try reading each section aloud to a friend. Let the voices sink in and do their work. ❖

## BOOKS IN BRIEF

### *Another Turn of the Crank*

by Wendell Berry

Counterpoint, 1995, \$18 (hardcover), \$12.50 (paper)

Essayist, poet, novelist—Wendell Berry is an American treasure. In this collection of six essays, he speaks eloquently for the land and the people who live and work it. There's irony in this slender volume's title, *Another Turn of the Crank*. Living on the land in Henry County, Kentucky, the somewhat cranky Berry sees just how hard it is to go against the grain of agribusiness, timber interests, and the ideology of consumption that cuts us off from our true selves. Yet he is willing to stand tall for community, agrarian life, and economic self-determination. This is really going with the grain, not flowing with the formica.

The essays here on rural community, on proper land use instead of romantic preservation, on health versus the health industry, are built on a vision that sees us in scale among all the many beings. This is not explicitly Buddhist, but it's close enough for me. Berry writes, "I believe that the Creation is one continuous fabric comprehending simultaneously what we mean by 'spirit' and what we mean by 'matter.'"

I hope Wendell Berry's crank keeps on turning.

### *Sex, Power & Boundaries: Understanding & Preventing Sexual Harassment*

by Peter Rutter, M.D.

Bantam, 1996, \$23.95 (hardcover)

Peter Rutter's earlier book, *Sex in the Forbidden Zone*, is a tool we use again and again in the painful process of understanding and preventing what can go wrong between teachers and students in our Buddhist communities. As a psychiatrist and teacher, he has a compassionate and clear minded view of the ethical principles and boundaries that create a healthy container for all kinds of relationship.

In this new volume, *Sex, Power & Boundaries: Understanding & Preventing Sexual Harassment*, Peter Rutter ventures into the complex and shifting territory of sexual objectification and harassment, particularly in the workplace. What are the unexamined myths of sexuality in our culture? How are both women and men harmed when these myths are blindly acted out? What are the legal implications of these behaviors? And how can we find ways to act towards each other with respect and recognition? This is difficult, necessary work and Dr. Rutter writes clearly so that we all have a chance of getting it, of recognizing each other's proper boundaries.

This book also includes an invaluable section of legal, organizational, and governmental resources for people who are facing issues of sexual harassment. An updated version of these resources can easily be found on the World Wide Web at [www.bdd.com/rutter](http://www.bdd.com/rutter). ♦

—Alan Senauke

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### *Allow the Water:*

*Anger, Fear, Power, Work, Sexuality, Community,  
and the Spirituality and Practice of Nonviolence*  
by Leonard Desroches

1996, 509 pages, \$29.95 + postage. Order from  
Editions Dunamis Publishers, 407 Bleeker St.,  
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In this sprawling, unkempt exploration of nonviolence, Leonard Desroches asks all the right questions about what our society would be like if we committed our human, spiritual, and material resources to justice and peace. It is also an intensely personal book, and reflects his Catholic theology and his life as a French-speaking Canadian in Ontario, although he draws on the writings and stories of people from many traditions and lands. Desroches is a veteran activist, who has endured prison for his convictions, and participated in many causes.

In a departure from most of the writing about nonviolence, Desroches gives more than lip service to nonviolence in sexual relations, by examining the poverty of commercialized sex and integrating that awareness into discussions of nonviolence in general.

Yet the book also fails to develop its ideas and stories to their potential power, and instead jumps from one quote or personal epiphany to another. I was left feeling hungry for some sustained focus. For example, Desroches tells us early on that he nearly drowned as a child—clearly a formative experience—but he leaves it at that. I suppose this is one risk of self-publishing. Still, I admire Desroches' breadth of scope and sheer tenacity, both as an activist and as one who is finding expression for his utopian vision.

—John Lindsay Poland

**Cloudhand, Clenched Fist:**

**Chaos, Crisis and the Emergence of Community**

by Rhea Y. Miller

1996, 160 pages, \$15. Order from LuraMedia, 7060 Miramar Road, Suite 104, San Diego, CA 92121. 619/578-1948

This is a fascinating book, and despite its intimidating title is very readable. Rhea Miller is a long-time activist for peace and social justice who has worked in the Sanctuary movement, co-founded the Tucson Peace Camp, and many times walked as a peace pilgrim. She holds a Master of Divinity degree and was elected as a county commissioner of the San Juan Islands, Washington. Rhea is weaving a new world view based on chaos theory, using the many strands of her experiences as an activist, avid reader, martial artist and responsible citizen.

With discourse and stories, quotations and illustrations, Rhea challenges us to see that the clenched fist attitude of Newtonian science will not serve us as well as the cloudhand attitude of the new science. Fluidity and flexibility are the stuff needed to build a cooperative and lasting society. Though the terminology comes from a variety of disciplines, many of the principles she holds up will be downright familiar from Buddhist teaching.

**The Good Heart: A Buddhist Perspective on the Teaching of Jesus**

by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, with an introduction by Laurence Freeman, OSB

Wisdom, 1996, 224 pages, \$24 (hardcover)

This rather complex book resulted from an invitation to His Holiness to deliver a seminar at the World Community for Christian Meditation held in London, September 1994. Apparently it was quite an event, and included daily meditation sessions led by His Holiness, discourse on selected texts from the Gospels, and dialogue that was transcribed, edited, and included as part of the book.

It was a bold and successful experiment. As Father Laurence remarks: "What struck me as we listened to you exploring our Holy Scriptures was that your intuitive wisdom and sense of truth, trained in Buddhism, enables you to see very deeply and very clearly into many of the truths of our Scriptures, and to reveal them to us in a new way...The way you explored our Scriptures with us also showed me—and all of us—an exercise in nonviolence."

If comparative religion is your thing, then this is your book.

—Barbara Hirshkowitz

BASIC WATER FACTS

- Only 3% of Earth's water supply is fresh water; 97% is salty ocean water.
- Groundwater makes up over 95% of usable fresh water supplies.
- 90% of the world's people get their fresh water from river basins.
- More than 200 rivers are shared by two or more countries, and more than 40% of the world's population relies on water originating in a country other than their own.
- Worldwide, irrigation accounts for over 70% of all water use, while industry accounts for about 22% and municipal and domestic account for 8%.
- Contaminated water causes over 80% of disease in the developing world and over one third of all deaths.
- 4-5 million children die every year due to diarrhea caused from contaminated water and lack of sewage treatment.

—Sources: Environmental Defense Fund, World Resources Institute, Worldwatch Institute, UNEP, UNDP, UN Children's Fund, World Health Organization

# WHAT YOU CAN DO TO RESPECT WATER

The resources listed below address a wide variety of water-related issues: increasing our awareness of water, enjoying water, conserving water, and water activism.

## 1. Study and inquiry

- *The Greenpeace Book of Water*. Klaus Lanz. (Sterling) *Of All Things Most Yielding*. Photography by John McCurdy, text selected by Marc Lappe (Sierra Club).
- *Sensitive Chaos, The Creation of Flowing Forms in Water and Air*, and *Water—The Element of Life*, both by Theodore Schwenk (Anthroposophic Press)
- *Waterworks: The State of Planet Water*. (PKI Ecopublishing, PO Box 210, Hackett AR 72937-0210)
- *Clean and Green: The Complete Guide to Nontoxic and Environmentally Safe Housekeeping*, by Annie Berthold-Bond (Ceres Press). A comprehensive “how-to” guide to nontoxic household cleaning.
- *Create an Oasis with Greywater: Your Complete Guide to Managing Greywater in the Landscape*, by Art Ludwig, (Oasis Design). Available through Real Goods.
- *Real Goods Catalog*, Hopland, California. (800) 762-9486. A source for ecological and sustainable building products, publications, and educational demonstrations, including composting toilets and water testing.
- *We All Live Downstream*. The Water Center, Route 7 Box 720. Eureka Springs, AR 72632.
- *Water, A Natural History*, by Alice Outwater (Basic Books).

## 2. Personal practice

Learn about your watershed. Where does your drinking water come from? What happens to your sewage? Call your municipal or county water district to find out how to get your water tested, then test annually.

Take a walk or sit near a lake, river, or bay and let yourself be nourished by water. Rent a rowboat or canoe to explore a waterway. Go backpacking in the wilderness and filter your own water. Follow a creek to its source.

If you live in a drought-prone area, plant native shrubs that require much less water than lawns.

Drink lots of water, each time whispering, “Thank you for my life” before you drink.

While on the toilet, meditate on your love of water, asking yourself “What can I do to help water?” When flushing the toilet, bow in gratitude to the water that takes care of your waste. Investigate composting toilets. (Send for a catalog from Real Goods, listed above.)

Don’t use toxic chemicals for housecleaning. (See *Clean and Green*, above.)

Bio-Clean is a nontoxic powder that treats household drains and whole septic systems. The active ingredient, bacteria, eat hair and grease, but they are killed by chlorine and alcohol, so you have to stop pouring things like bleach down the drain. It’s distributed by a Zen Buddhist

plumber: Stan Kincannon, “Mr. Rooter,” 10055 Diener Dr., Kelseyville, CA. Call: 1-800-96DRAIN

Avoid garbage disposals; learn to compost, feed your kitchen waste to worms, or bury it in the ground.

## 3. Community-Based Action

Insist that your community have clean water so that everyone doesn’t have to drink bottled water. If, as in our nation’s capitol, the water is unsuitable for human consumption, insist that free bottled water be available for the poor and in public places.

Join with others in your community to adopt a creek or a stream and clean up the land beside it. Many urban creeks have been covered or put in pipes so that more land could be developed. Uncover those creeks and open them to air. Join the creek liberation movement!

Learn about sewage treatment in your community. Protest the dumping of raw sewage into oceans and rivers. Press for alternatives to chlorine.

Organize your sangha or group to work on water issues and to have water rituals.

## 4. National and International Work

**Global Rivers Environmental Education Network (GREEN)**, Ann Arbor, MI, supports student activism on behalf of rivers in many countries, and develops educational materials. 206 S. 5th Ave., Suite 150, Ann Arbor, MI 48104. E-mail: green@green.org.

**International Rivers Network** helps prevent unnecessary damming of rivers and works for river health in Brazil, China, India, and other countries. 1847 Berkeley Way, Berkeley, CA 94703. E-mail: irndc@irn.org

**American Rivers** works to protect and restore America’s river systems and to foster a river stewardship ethic. They focus on protecting wild rivers, and restoring hometown and big rivers: the Columbia, the Colorado, and the Mississippi. 1025 Vermont Ave. NW, Suite 720, Washington, DC 20005; Tel: 202-547-6900.

**River Network** works regionally, helping people organize to save rivers in their own communities. 4000 Albemarle St. NW, #303, Washington, DC 20016; Tel: 202-364-2550.

**American Oceans Campaign** has a mission to protect marine environments on both coasts. 725 Arizona Ave., Suite 102, Santa Monica, CA 90401. Tel: 310-576-6162.

**Restore America’s Estuaries** is an alliance of 8 regional environmental groups working together to restore habitat in estuaries, river deltas, bays, wetlands, river marshes. Their small central office helps coordinate efforts on the West, Gulf, and East Coasts. 1200 New York Ave. NW, Suite 400, Washington, DC 20005. Tel: 202-289-2380. ❖ — *Tova Green*

## CHAPTER & ACTIVIST NEWS

The **Milwaukee Chapter** is new and quite active. Members have been volunteering for a literacy program, held a meditation retreat, and are excited about the possibility of getting involved in prison work. Some members also started a bi-weekly meditation group in a hospital.

Guy Armstrong, a vipassana teacher, led a weekend meditation retreat sponsored by the **San Diego Chapter**. Another retreat is scheduled in March with Debra Chamberlin-Taylor. The chapter continues to take food to a transitional housing program.

The **Seattle Chapter** has been co-sponsoring a monthly "Buddhist Peace Hour" at the Seattle Practice Center. The program is as follows: meditation, informational discussion about a particular area of suffering in the world (recently—landmines, next—sex trade), more meditation, discussion, an action component (letter writing, petitions), more meditation, and dedication of merit.

The bulk of the energy of the **Yellow Springs Chapter** has been focused on starting a non-denominational dharma center. Members are also involved in

beginning a prison ministry project. Currently they are visiting prisoners and trying to get a meditation class underway inside the prison.

Dr. Paula Green, director of the **Karuna Center** in Massachusetts, co-facilitated a week-long workshop on "Buddhism and Development" with Nepali activists in Nepal. Seventy Nepalis attended the workshop, some walking several days through the mountains before reaching a bus to take them to Pokhara. The workshop used an engaged Buddhist perspective to focus on leadership training and development for women, and for the rights and development of indigenous peoples in Nepal.

### Other News Briefs

Friends in **Boston, Santa Cruz,** and the **Boulder-Denver** area are gearing up for new BASE programs starting in the spring. We'll update you next issue.

**Buddhist Council of the Midwest** reports that members of a Thai temple are teaching meditation at Indiana State Prison, and Dharmadhatu members are doing the same at Westville Correctional Center. ❖

## NEW BPF BOARD MEMBERS

The BPF Board has selected three new members to fill the open seats on the Board, and they are introduced below. We are reviewing our process for selecting Board members to make it more participatory, and we'll have more about this in the Summer issue of *TW*.

### Lourdes Arguelles

Lourdes was born in Cuba and educated in the U.S., Canada, and Europe. She is professor of education at the Claremont Graduate School, where she teaches courses in immigrant and refugee resettlement, gender and feminist studies, as well as teaching, activism, and spirituality. She is also a licensed psychotherapist, doing mostly pro-bono work with sexual minorities, recent immigrants and refugees, and people living with HIV/AIDS.

Lourdes has studied Buddhism for 25 years, and has worked with many Tibetan lamas, including the Dalai Lama. She currently practices within the Order of Interbeing (in the tradition of Thich Nhat Hanh), and also sits at Green Gulch Farm Zen Center.

She and her partner, Anne Rivero, live in a multiracial working-class neighborhood. They are active in their neighborhood association, struggling with such issues as gentrification and rampant commercial development.

### Maylie Scott

Maylie has been a priest at the Berkeley Zen Center since 1989, and she is the teacher for the Arcata Zen

Group in Humboldt County, California. Over the years, she has been "experimenting" with a variety of social service/justice adventures. Maylie says her quest is to discover what it is to be an engaged Buddhist, her dream is to move into an activist, well-regulated practice place, and her challenge is to discover with what actions and what voice the Buddhist community can respond vigorously to the institutional violence that surrounds us.

Maylie, who has an MSW degree, worked for 16 years in county mental health. When she turned 50, she traded her fast-paced life for a more practice-oriented one. Along with other activists, she has practiced meditation and nonviolent resistance at the Concord Naval Weapons Station. Maylie has also been involved in AIDS work and homeless issues. Recently, she has twice been a mentor for the BPF BASE program.

### Nonnie Welch

Nonnie is a long-time San Francisco Bay Area activist and Crabgrass Foundation staff and board member (Crabgrass funds international activist projects). She has worked on environmental and grassroots economic development (with the "Fair Trade" organization), progressive businesswomen's money management, and for alternatives to the globalization of the economy. Dustbunnies have been sitting on her zafu recently, while she has taken on as a teacher a 50-year-old house that she is ecologically renovating. ❖

## COORDINATOR'S REPORT

Coming out of the dark time of winter, the plum blossoms in our yard are showering white petals on the muddy ground. It is a powerful moment of renewal, encouraging and refreshing just when I need it.

December brought bittersweet celebration and sorrow. Sue Moon and I flew to Hawaii to take part in Aitken Roshi's retirement ceremony. (See Sue's report on page 35.) It was a wonderful event, honoring 50 years of practice, writing, and open-hearted teaching. Roshi had to sit still through much praise and testimonial. Finally, he leaned over to San Francisco abbot Mel Weitsman and asked, "Who is this paragon?" Many of us at BPF would be glad to tell him. In February Aitken Roshi moved to the Big Island, right next to his son Tom's place. He swears this is retirement—nearing the age of 80—but his book projects are lined up for years to come. We wish him good health and great satisfaction. There is no one whose friendship and guidance we value more highly.

Just before Christmas, my friend David Nadel, Berkeley community activist and proprietor of the dance club Ashkenaz, was murdered on the doorstep of his club. He was shot by a man who had twice that night been escorted out of the club, and had come back with a gun and a friend to drive the getaway car. David's death is a deep personal loss, and an inexpressible loss to the music and activist communities. David's vision of Ashkenaz was as a place where culture and engagement naturally came together. And because of his tough and tender style—it did. As a musician I could see this so clearly. Ashkenaz was my home club. I've played there every two or three months for the last ten years. David's memorial was two days of non-stop music played by all the Ashkenaz regulars—Cajun, Reggae, world beat, and folk bands—for a vast community of dancers and activists. Standing on stage playing Cajun music as I had so often done before, I had the strangest feeling of grief and joy interwoven, eyes welling with tears as the music cast its spell.

The senselessness of his murder doesn't add up, but it brings the everyday reality of violence in America very close to home. David would have been the first person to explain to you why that was so and whose pockets were lined by this violence. I could say much more, but I'll simply say I miss him and grieve with and for all of us touched by this kind of death.

Last week I traveled south to Los Angeles and to Santa Fe, New Mexico where I collaborated with BPF board members, meeting local BPF members and other engaged Buddhists. In the L.A. area I stayed with new board member Lourdes Arguelles, who teaches at Claremont College, an hour east of Los Angeles prop-

er. I visited Lourdes' class in the graduate education program, a seminar on Buddhist approaches to social action, certainly one of the few classes of this kind at a major university. The students raised challenging questions about "Buddhist" social action. Coming from various non-Buddhist backgrounds, they also had a great curiosity about different forms of dharma practice in the U.S. In Los Angeles proper I talked with members of the local chapter, strategizing about how they might extend their membership and take on some unified action and direction.

Santa Fe was crisp and very cold for a converted Californian like me. Board member Greg Mello directs the Los Alamos Study Group there, a nuclear weapons watchdog focusing on the nearby Los Alamos weapons lab. Greg set up a number of meetings with Santa Fe Buddhists interested in social engagement. Both in L.A. and in Santa Fe people had keen interest in the BASE program and wondered how they might start a BASE group or adapt the form to fit local circumstances. It was exciting for practitioners in various traditions just to sit down together and talk about possibilities. But the excitement was balanced by several sobering realities: the energy needed to support their own practice communities, the work each person was already doing, the plain fact of late twentieth century busy-ness. How can new structures like BASE or BPF chapters take a shape that at once builds engaged community and respects the already daunting conditions of our lives? This is a core question for all of us. Thanks go to our friends in the south who have helped advance the discussion. —Alan Senauke

### A Note From Board President Tova Green

We took a big leap at the January board meeting and approved a "futures budget" which will allow us to move to a larger office and increase staff hours. This budget reflects work the staff and board have been doing and will continue to do to examine BPF's direction and program. We are excited and a bit nervous about our commitment to raise the additional money it will take to do the things that will enable BPF to grow. As the process unfolds we will tell you more about it, and we hope you will have ideas and resources to help with direction and with fundraising. ❖

### Goodbye

(for a friend)

*They say you're gone—but look!*

*The same sky*

*The same night*

*The same wide road.*

—Thaisa Frank

# ANNOUNCEMENTS & CLASSIFIEDS

**JEWISH MEDITATION** Conference, sponsored by Chochmat HaLev. All are welcome. Presenters include: David and Shoshana Cooper, Avram Davis, Nan Fink, Shefa Gold, Alan Lew, Jonathan Omer-Man, and Dovid Zeller. April 5 & 6, 1997, at Beth Sholom, 1301 Clement St., San Francisco. Info: 510/704-9687.

**MEDICAL CHI KUNG** is an ancient Taoist system of simple movement, breathwork, visualization, and meditation. It is gentle and easy to learn. Daily practice encourages self-healing by mobilizing the body's natural healing capacities. Chi Kung is profound inner medicine that quiets the mind, increases energy and vitality, enhances immunity and encourages longevity and spiritual development. For information and schedule of San Francisco Bay Area classes, call Ellen Raskin at 415/431-3703.

**THE CONCH-US TIMES**, the Journal of the Dead Buddhists of America, for those appreciating both Grateful Dead and Buddhist Cultures: \$8/yr. Payable to: Ken Sun-Downer, Box 769, Idyllwild, CA 92549.

Inflate your zafu, deflate your ego! Our **INFLATABLE ZAFU**, at only 6 ounces, is great for travel! Black, Navy, Royal, Purple, Burgundy, Green. \$27 Postpaid! Also: traditional ZAFUS and ZABUTONS, BENCHES, YOGA VIDEOS, BELLS, BOOKS & more! Satisfaction guaranteed. Credit cards accepted. Free brochure. Carolina Morning Designs, Dept. TW, Rte. 67, Box 61, Cullowhee, NC 28723. 704/293-5906.

**PEN PALS WANTED.** Male Buddhist inmates in various prisons around the U.S. are in search of Buddhist pen pals. If you have a P.O. box and are interested, contact Lewis at the BPF office.

**BISEXUAL BUDDHIST ASSOC.** affirming unity, positive self-image, and bisexual identity for those committed to meditation and mindfulness practice. P.O. Box 858, Amherst, MA 01004-0858.

**IMMIGRATION SERVICES** for international sangha. Individuals, organizations. Theodore C. Olsen, Immigration Law Offices. 970/468-0219. E-mail: 73344.1167@compuserve.com.

**BPF'S AFFILIATE, THE GAY BUDDHIST FELLOWSHIP**, has sittings, speakers, and discussions every Thursday evening and every other Sunday morning in San Francisco. They also offer classes, workshops, weekend retreats, and monthly potluck dinners and participate in Buddhist AIDS projects. The newsletter, with information and articles on topics of concern to gay Buddhists, is available for \$15/8 issues. (See inside back cover for address.)

**THE PRISON DHARMA NETWORK** is alive and well and in need of funds. Please send your tax-deductible donations to: PDN, P.O. Box 912, Astor Station, Boston, MA 02123.

**HELPING HOMELESS WOMEN AND CHILDREN:** You can help by donating personal care items that are greatly needed—toothbrushes, toothpaste, soap, shampoo, hair brushes, combs, and hand lotion—to the Women's Daytime Drop-in Center in Berkeley. Volunteers are also needed to work with the women and children. For more info: 510/548-6933.

**VOLUNTEER M.D.'S AND NURSES** are needed to provide health care to Tibetans in India. Former volunteer will provide information on how to help. Barry Samuel, M.D., 18324 Newell Rd., Shaker Heights, OH 44122-5052.

**ZEN VIEWS**, *Generic Zen With a Beat*. Commentary, translations, reviews, recipes. Subscriptions: \$10. P.O. Box 273, Powell River, British Columbia, V8A 4Z6, Canada.

**VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES** in a Buddhist community. We invite you to participate in a work/study program offering classes, room, board, and a small stipend. The work schedule is demanding but rewarding. Work for a leading Buddhist publisher in the areas of shipping, warehousing, book-binding, and sacred text preservation. Part-time internships also available. Dharma Publishing, 2910 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley, CA 94702. 510/548-5407.

**PROPERTY CARETAKING JOBS AVAILABLE.** Enjoy peaceful rent-free living! Worldwide! *The Caretaker Gazette*, 1845 Deane-TW, Pullman, WA 99163; 509/332-0806, \$24/year.

**HOMELESS AND HOUSED** people meet weekly in Berkeley, California, for meditation and discussion. Volunteers from Berkeley Zen Center and East Bay Insight Meditation facilitate sessions oriented toward stress-reduction. Free coffee and bagels. Mondays, 7:30 to 9 p.m., 2345 Dana St., Berkeley. For more info, call the Chaplaincy to the Homeless at 510/548-0551. All are welcome.

**SUPPORT HOMELESS PEOPLE:** The Berkeley Ecumenical Chaplaincy to the Homeless is seeking supporters for its new "Community of Compassion," a group of people underwriting monthly rent (\$300/person) for the Haste St. Transitional House, which seeks to empower homeless adults in their move from the streets to permanent housing. This progressive, interfaith program involves homeless people in counseling, volunteer work, job development and community living. For information, write: 2345 Channing Way, Berkeley, CA 94704, or call 510/548-0551.

**BUDDHIST-ORIENTED** community forming in Belize. Individualism, diversity, and wholesome interaction with the local indigenous community. We're hoping to pool our resources to purchase a large attractive parcel of land and develop it cooperatively towards the possibility of supporting Dharma-related activities. Ken Albertsen, P.O. Box 339, Nevada City, CA 95959; 916/265-9099.

**SUMMER DHARMA INTENSIVE—** Integrate practice into daily life at Vajrapani Institute—Tibetan Buddhist retreat center in the California Redwoods. Program includes classes with resident Geshe, weekend courses, meditation, discussion groups, and work practice. \$600. Space is limited. Contact Kate Savanna: 408/338-6654.

**WORLD ARTISTS** for Tibet. Organized by members of the European Parliament to bring world-wide attention to the human rights violations that are going on in Tibet. In the first phase of the project we are asking artists from all over the world to create art or use existing work to capture the culture or plight of the Tibetan people, and to find a location to exhibit the art from July 1-August 31, 1998. Contact Ronit Herzfeld by May 1, 1997 at 718/658-0906.

# HELPING TURN THE WHEEL

*BPF gratefully acknowledges contributions above membership received between October 1, 1996 & December 31, 1996.*

Nina Allen ❖ Anonymous ❖ Susan Armstrong ❖ Stephen Gregory Ascue ❖ Walter Ausserere ❖ Annie Baehr ❖ Ralph Bailey ❖ Billy Barrios ❖ Linda Barrow ❖ Cynthia Barry ❖ Katy Belt ❖ Samuel Benner ❖ Frank Benson ❖ Samuel Bercholz ❖ Woody Bernard ❖ Arthur Borden ❖ David Bordinat ❖ Gary Boren ❖ Patricia Borri ❖ Paul Boumbulian ❖ Bob Bowman ❖ J.E. Bradshaw ❖ E. Brandt ❖ Cynthia Branigan ❖ Brookrod ❖ Larry Brooks ❖ Anne Brown ❖ Don Brown ❖ James Brylski ❖ Joanna Bull ❖ Frank Cadwell ❖ Linda Cameron ❖ Ralph Cantor ❖ Barbara Caplow ❖ Sindona Casteel ❖ Jamie Caster ❖ Christopher Chapple ❖ Pimporn Chavasant ❖ David Chura ❖ Trena Cleland ❖ Mary Coar ❖ Pete Coglianesi ❖ Casey Cohen ❖ Margo Cooper ❖ John Michael Cooper ❖ Susan Copeland ❖ Jeanne Courtney ❖ D. Kevin Crovo ❖ Robert Curran ❖ Ann Dasburg ❖ Martha & Lee De Barros ❖ John Dean ❖ Russell Delman ❖ Donna Denman ❖ Danna Denning ❖ D. Aleksander Denoff ❖ Kathleen Dickey ❖ Rosemary Donnell ❖ Susanne Dowouis ❖ James Doyle ❖ Robert Dreyfuss ❖ Andrew Dyke ❖ Steven Edwards ❖ Mary Ann Eininger ❖ Fred Elbert ❖ Mary Fabri ❖ Nancy Farr ❖ Fellowship In Prayer ❖ Financial Investment Management Group ❖ Keith Finlayson ❖ Alan Fishman ❖ Darlene Fisk ❖ Victor Fitterman ❖ Karen Fletcher ❖ Jeff Foott ❖ Andrew Fort ❖ Steven Foster ❖ George Franklin ❖ Roni Rogers Freed ❖ Lenore Friedman ❖ Gil Fronsdal ❖ Katherine Garnett ❖ T.A. Gibbs ❖ Mark & Leigh Gibson ❖ Susan Gidwitz ❖ William Gilbert ❖ Rhoda Gilman ❖ Michael Glenn-Lewis ❖ Sheila Glover ❖ Myra Rubin & Andrew Goodman ❖ Janice Gordon ❖ Douglas Gould ❖ Patrick Grace ❖ Michael Gray ❖ Arthur Greeno ❖ Ann Greenwater ❖ Judith Hallock ❖ Jorgen Hannibal ❖ Marcia Hansen ❖ Gloria Harper ❖ James Harrower ❖ Lorinda Sheets Hartwell ❖ Kevin Havener ❖ Elizabeth Hearn-Pratt ❖ Anne Hench ❖ Jo Ann Higgs ❖ Gregory Hill ❖ James Hill M.D. ❖ Jennifer Hipp ❖ Cynthia Hoffman ❖ Ned Hoke ❖ Sean Hopper ❖ Jeanette Hotchkiss ❖ Sarah Hsia ❖ Anne Hudes ❖ Karen Ingvoldstad ❖ Donald Jackson ❖ D. Janowitz ❖ Constance Johnson-Chapman ❖ Linn Jones ❖ Wesley Jones ❖ Elwyn Jordan ❖ John Jory ❖ Balin Kalimac ❖ Susan Kaplow ❖ Lawrence Katz ❖ Keido Les Kaye ❖ John Keller ❖ Charles King ❖ Jim Kline ❖ Dorothy Kostriken ❖ Kenneth Kraft ❖ Jonathan Kramer ❖ Murali Krishnaswami ❖ John Lawlor ❖ Ami Laws ❖ Dan Lederer ❖ Gloria Lee ❖ Mark Leventer ❖ Eva & Alan Leveton ❖ Stella Levy ❖ David Lewis ❖ Charlotte Linde ❖ Jess Lionheart ❖ Kathy Liu ❖ Susanne Lloyd ❖ Bruce Lockhart ❖ Alfred Lockwood ❖ Edward Lorah ❖ David Loy ❖ Karen Lurie ❖ Terry Lee Lyon ❖ P.J. Macchi ❖ Diane Mack ❖ Joanna Macy ❖ Lisa Mahon ❖ Ann Mahoney ❖ Susan Mailler ❖ C.T. Mansfield ❖ Howard Margolis ❖ Laura Mark ❖ Henry Marksberry ❖ John Martone ❖ Leslie McHenry ❖ Kathleen Meagher ❖ Anne Metrick ❖ Suzanne Mihara ❖ Barbara Miles ❖ Jack Miller ❖ Richard Modiano ❖ Penelope More ❖ Marianne Murray ❖ Susan Musicant ❖ Mary Myers ❖ Barbara Neal ❖ Vera & Joe O'Brien ❖ Frank Olinsky ❖ Ordinary Dharma ❖ Peter & Susan Overton ❖ Andre Papantonio ❖ Lon Parsons ❖ Alice Peck ❖ Gerard Pelletier ❖ Mary Elizabeth Peterson ❖ Myfanwy Plank ❖ Vicki Pollard ❖ Vivian Pon ❖ Ellen Poss ❖ Susan Postal ❖ Renee Potik ❖ Wolfgang Presser ❖ Ralph Quillman ❖ Margaret Holme Rader ❖ Judith Ragir ❖ Tamar Read ❖ Mark Redmond ❖ Bob Repoley ❖ Dianne Reynolds ❖ Craig Richards ❖ William Richards ❖ Paul Ricker ❖ Marilyn Rinzler ❖ Russell Roberts ❖ Jason Roberts ❖ Donald Rommel ❖ Kenneth Rosen ❖ David Ross Smith ❖ Dale Rudin ❖ Nancy Rudolph ❖ Steven Weintraub & Linda Ruth Cutts ❖ Stephen Saltonstall ❖ Lotti Sanders ❖ Carol Ann Sawyer ❖ Grace Jill Schireson ❖ Judith Schlaeger ❖ Debbie Schneider ❖ Margaret Schonfield ❖ Charles Schultz ❖ Maylie Scott ❖ Charlotte Selver ❖ Judith Sharp ❖ Richard Shaw ❖ Layle Silbert ❖ Nancy Simmons ❖ Cyndi Smith ❖ Michael Smith ❖ Robert Smith ❖ Ann Spanel ❖ Rod Spangle ❖ Mark Sprecher ❖ Susan Stampley ❖ Pieta Steffens ❖ James Sterhardt ❖ Jon Stone ❖ J. Bradley Stroup ❖ Maureen Sweeney ❖ Michael Sweet ❖ John Tamburino ❖ David Taylor ❖ Katherine Thanas ❖ Priscilla Thierry ❖ Christiana Tiedemann ❖ Richard Tierney ❖ Robin Todhunter ❖ Dorothy Tollifson ❖ Mary Evelyn Tucker ❖ Kirk Twardowski ❖ Chase Twichell ❖ Grove Burnett & Linda Velarde ❖ Joan Wager ❖ Paula Walker ❖ Henry Waller ❖ John Wallin ❖ William Weber ❖ Margaret Weimer ❖ David White ❖ Allan Whiteman ❖ Natasha Wist ❖ Denoya Wyatt ❖ Eva Yarmo ❖ Ruth Zaporah ❖ Zen Mountain Monastery ❖ Linda & Michael Zillinger ❖ Delia & Paul Zisman ❖

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❖ Thank you! ❖

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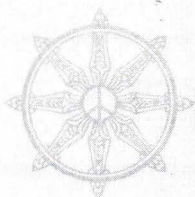
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## *The Power of Nonviolence*

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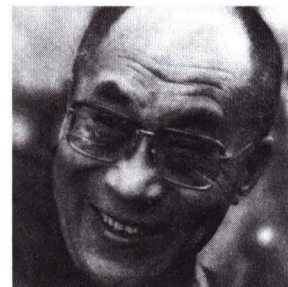
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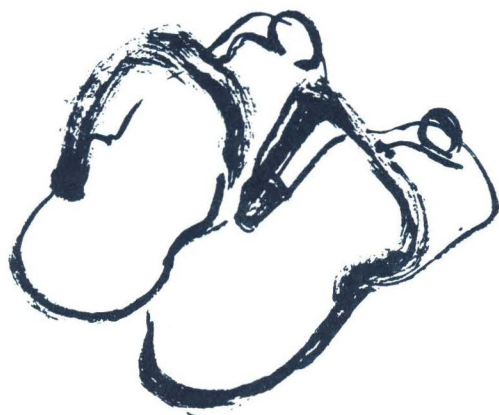


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