TURNING WHEEL
Journal of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship
Winter 2000 $4.00

Time

How to:

Have the time of our lives

❊

Remember the one who is not busy

❊

Enter the Millennial daze

❊

Slow down

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

Also in this issue—

Encountering consumerism:
A journey in Thailand

7 50644 89284 3 04

From the Editor

Our hurry is based on a sense of lack. We think we don't have enough time. But time's what our lives are made of. What else have we got BUT time? What if the ocean cried out to the sky, "I don't have enough water!" We have all the time in the world. (And we're just about to get another thousand years.) There's nothing to stop us from having the time of our lives.

The more we concern ourselves with the suffering in the world around us, whether it's the exploitation of prison labor for corporate profit or the poisoning of the oceans, the greater our sense of urgency. And yet this rushing about is robbing us of our spirit. If we humans are to be of use to each other and to our animal, vegetable, and mineral friends, we had better slow down, fast.

Here, with my parenthetical observations, is a story I like about two monks—brothers—in China a long time ago. Yunyan was the younger brother—dogged and stupid, in that faithful Zen way. His older brother Daowu often scolded him. So,

As Yunyan was sweeping the ground, Daowu said, "Too busy." (You should be meditating.)

Yunyan said, "You should know there's one who isn't busy." (Inside me there's also someone who's peaceful.)

Daowu said, "If so, then there's a second moon." (Saying you're busy and not busy at the same time is like saying there are two moons in the sky.)

Yunyan held up the broom and said, "Which moon is this?" (Both stillness and sweeping are present in the broom.) (Case 21, *Book of Serenity,* Lindisfarne Press)

What I like about this koan is that we don't have to stop sweeping. The whole point is that we can and must keep sweeping up the plastic bags and the toxic spills, even while we remember the unbusy one within. There's only one moon.

This brings me to my five-point plan for practicing with busy-ness.

1) Remember the one who's not busy. In this practice you don't have to change anything but your attitude. In the midst of your most frantic sweeping, there is stillness, like the center of a spinning wheel.

2) Do your "hammock practice." For at least a few minutes every day, get off the grid of the clock. Lie in a hammock and stare at the sky, or otherwise "waste" time. Or meditate, as long as you don't expect to improve yourself thereby.

3) Don't do it. This is about simplifying your life, in big and little ways. Many of the things you think you have to do, you don't really have to do. Pretend you broke your leg. Then what? (See Diana Winston's article, page 19.)

4) Do it. The partner practice to #3, this is about not hanging back, about remembering that you are going to die, and you might as well go ahead and do the things you care about. Don't dilly-dally; just proceed, calmly, to the next thing. There's sweeping to be done.

5) Turn yourself inside out, like a pillow giving away its feathers. When you throw your full self into what you care about, whether it's climbing a tree or demonstrating before the World Trade Organization, self-clinging turns to dust and blows away, and there's nobody left to be in a hurry.

So I'll try, too. I promise. Especially number 3.

With this issue of *TW* we welcome a new book review editor, Marianne Dresser. Marianne knows the world of Buddhist books well; she has worked as an editor at Parallax Press and North Atlantic Books, and is the creator and editor of the anthology, *Buddhist Women on the Edge* (North Atlantic, 1996). She brings curiosity, enthusiasm, an analytical mind, and an old-fashioned love of books (and films) to the job. The Buddhist book industry is booming, and we need Marianne to help *TW* make sense of it all. She's off to a great start. This issue is packed with reviews, including Marianne's video reviews on page 37.

And many thanks to Barbara Hirshkowitz, who served as book review editor for several years, all the way from Philadelphia, patiently meeting the challenge of working across that distance. ❖ —*Susan Moon*

Turning Wheel

Editor
Susan Moon

Assistant Editor and Advertising Director
Marija Duerr

Book Review Editor
Marianne Dresser

Consulting Readers & Editors
Tova Green, Robin Hart, Annette Herskovits, Mushim Ikeda-Nash, Mark Kunkel, Karen Payne, Jon Stewart, Meredith Stout, Lewis Woods

Production & Design
Lawrence Watson

International Advisory Board
Robert Aitken, A.T. Ariyaratne, Christina Feldman, Maha Ghosananda, Ane Pema Chödrön, Lodi Gyari, Mamoru Kato, Joanna Macy, Thich Nhat Hanh, Sulak Sivaraksa, Gary Snyder, Christopher Titmuss

Director
Alan Senauke

The Buddhist Peace Fellowship was founded in 1978, to bring a Buddhist perspective to the peace movement, and to bring the peace movement to the Buddhist community.

See insert card for subscription information. Single copies $5.00 postpaid from:

BPF National Office
P.O. Box 4650, Berkeley, CA 94704
T: 510/655-6169; F: 510/655-1369
www.bpf.org/bpf

ISSN 1065-058X

printed on recycled paper

Cover art by Davis TeSelle

For future themes of *TW,* see back cover. Send paper, disk, or email submissions, with SASE for return of materials.

CONTENTS

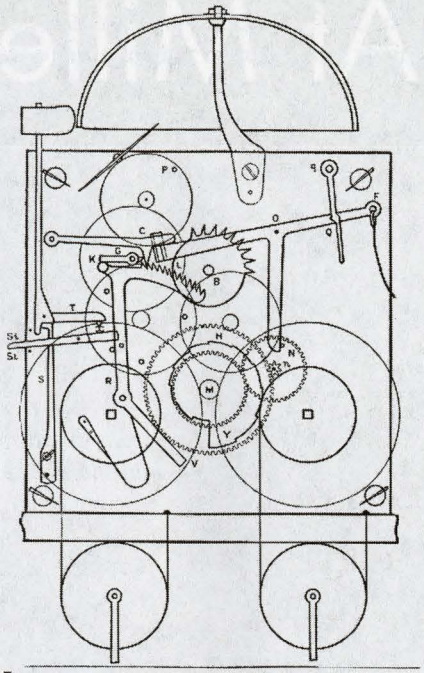


FIG. 10.—DIAGRAM OF A FRONT VIEW OF COMMON ENGLISH CLOCK WITH STRIKING MOVEMENT

TIME AND THE LACK OF IT

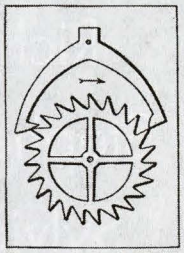


FIG. 2.—ANCHOR OR RECOIL ESCAPEMENT, ONE OF THE EARLIEST ATTEMPTS TO USE A PENDULUM

LETTERS

Please write to us. We welcome your responses to what we print. When you think we are one-sided, or leave out important perspectives, let us and our readers know. Tell us what you like, too. Letters may be edited for space and clarity.

Dharma Transmission

The transmission discussion seems to have rounded itself out nicely, with Mel Weitsman's and Nelson Foster's pieces (*TW* Summer 1999). I think perhaps a related but hidden issue is the institutionalization of Buddhism altogether. It seems that a helpful lens for seeing this process is compassion. That is, that people go through the trouble of creating institutions, administering them, and passing on the responsibility for them from a basis of compassion—of offering the gift of the dharma to others. Such work is no fun, and the (imagined) glory of it is minimal. It is done for the benefit of others.

Once Buddha died, what were the followers to do? Wander around India like their master did? Practice in caves and grow long hair? Set up monasteries, hold councils, create universities and lineages? If one chooses the latter path, (thank goodness some of the Buddha's disciples did!) then one is faced with a tough job.

Anyone who has worked in one knows that setting up and administering a practice center is probably the most difficult thing one can try in the realm of outer Buddhist practice. If one wants to have property on which to practice, then the property must be bought or rented. In the modern world, this means, practically, an organization. Organizations need leaders and leadership. Religious organizations need religious leaders. Governments and other powerful institutions—landlords, for example—ask to see the sources of authority for said religious leaders.

We have been asked, and continue to be asked, to show our lines of descent, religious and legal. Here in Europe, church and state were not separated for many centuries. I suspect that early Chinese Buddhists, trying to get land for a monastery or temple circa 600-900 C.E., ran into problems of this kind, and had to show some official their lineage papers. This is not to say that I think Buddhist lineages were concocted for purposes of real estate. I actually believe in the ear-whispered tradition, handed down warm hand to warm hand, like they say, outside of scriptures.

Such ceremonies can be and have been done in public, something like weddings or anniversaries. But there are private parts too. As one Tibetan said, when pressed on the issue of privacy and secrecy in vajrayana: "Would you make love with your boyfriend on the street?"

—David Schneider, Director, Shambhala Europe, Köln, Germany

Kosovo: Another Point of View

I beg to disagree with at least some aspect of every point of the "Ten Talking Points on Kosovo" *(TW* Summer 1999). I think that the Fellowship of Reconciliation has taken its criticism of our country and our society too far, and that in reprinting their material we should be a bit more critical ourselves.

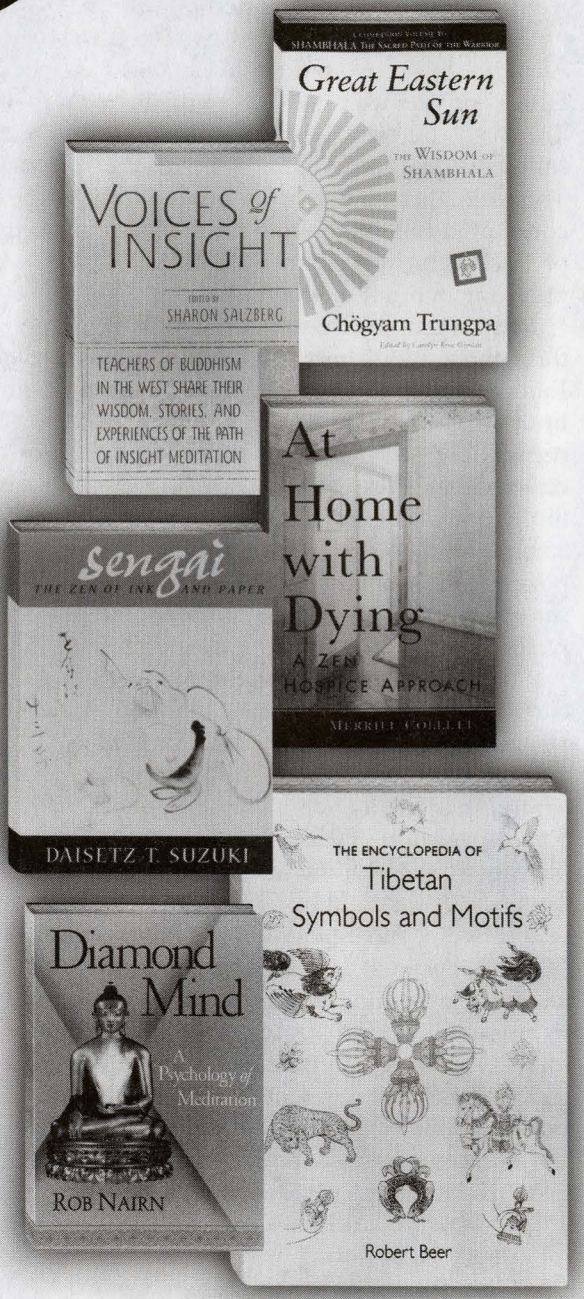
First, it is fine to say that "Serbian genocide of Albanians in Kosovo must be condemned and the perpetrators prosecuted at the International War Crimes Tribunal," but who volunteers to go arrest Slobodan Milosevic and turn him over to the International Tribunal? There simply is no police power in the world constituted and empowered for this purpose. Regardless of NATO, throughout the 1990s Milosevic has shown utter contempt for international law.

Serbian-led ethnic cleansing has been going on throughout the former Yugoslavia for nearly a decade. Europeans and Americans (among others) were horrified by it in Croatia, but did nothing to stop it. Then it occurred again in Bosnia, while European governments dithered, until NATO—under American leadership—finally took action, effectively stopping the war and attempting to build a fragile peace. Milosevic's grip on power at the moment is anything but strengthened, as it surely would have been if he had been able to quietly ethnically cleanse Kosovo as was clearly planned. Although the opposition remains fragmented, large numbers of Serbian people are now eager to throw Milosevic out, which would not have happened without NATO intervention, and may even provide the opportunity for prosecuting him at the International Tribunal. The United Nations squandered whatever moral authority it had by its inability to deal with the situation in Bosnia (until NATO finally took over), and by its inability to deal with Kosovo in the face of mounting violent Serb repression. (If the UN had approved, would the bombing have been OK? In any event, protection of internationally recognized human rights cannot be held hostage to a Security Council veto.)

Without doubt, Serb ethnic cleansing was speeded up and became more violent in response to the NATO bombing, but to hold NATO responsible for the Serbian government's widespread and systematic murder of its own people is beyond comprehension. In regard to the allegation that "NATO failed to support the nonviolence movement in Kosovo," perhaps the West as a whole failed in this respect, but this is simply not NATO's job. I strongly question the assertion that nonviolent peace organizations had been preventing ethnic cleansing, which had been intensifying progressively over at least a year prior to the beginning of the bombing. And is there any evidence that "NATO [intentionally] targeted welfare offices, institutions of higher learning, and medical facilities"? These claims sound more like wild-eyed propaganda than anything worth repeating in *TW*.

(continued on page 9)

Shambhala



Great Eastern Sun

The Wisdom of Shambhala

Chögyam Trungpa

The long-awaited companion volume to the best-selling *Shambhala: The Sacred Path of the Warrior.* "I am delighted that these wonderful teachings—which have so profoundly influenced and shaped my life—are now available to benefit others. May countless people have the good fortune to read this book." –Pema Chödrön, author of *When Things Fall Apart.*

$24.95 cloth • 1-57062-293-0

Voices of Insight

Edited by Sharon Salzberg

Foreword by Mirabai Bush

Vipassana teachers share their wisdom, stories, and experiences of the path of insight meditation. "An inspiring, invaluable, and delicious Dharma feast—a gift of the spirit." –Daniel Goleman, author of *Emotional Intelligence.*

$23.95 cloth • 1-57062-398-8

At Home with Dying

A Zen Hospice Approach

Merrill Collett

"Conveys a real empathy and understanding for the caregiver's challenge. It would be hard to find a clearer and more helpful discussion of nitty-gritty caregiving tasks." –*Washington Post.*

$15.00 paper • 1-57062-515-8

Sengai

The Zen of Ink and Paper

D.T. Suzuki

Gibbon Sengai (1750-1837) is certainly one of the most illustrious artists Japan has ever produced. A Zen master of the Rinzai school, he was known for his unorthodox but effective teaching style and for his humor —which comes through in his expressive calligraphies and paintings that are renowned throughout the world.

$17.95 paper • 1-57062-489-5

Diamond Mind

A Psychology of Meditation

Rob Nairn

The principles of Buddhist psychology expressed in a way that is easy to understand yet remarkably accurate and complete. "A joy to read." –Joseph Goldstein.

$16.95 cloth • 1-57062-536-0

The Encyclopedia of Tibetan Symbols and Motifs

Robert Beer

An exhaustive reference to the seemingly infinite variety of symbols found throughout Tibetan art in line drawings, paintings, and ritual objects. The ultimate sourcebook to the symbolic language of Tibetan art.

$60.00 cloth • 1-57062-416-X

SHAMBHALA 30TH ANNIVERSARY 1969-1999

SHAMBHALA PUBLICATIONS

Celebrating Thirty Years of Independent Publishing

Now at your bookstore, or order from Shambhala Publications
Phone: 800-733-3000
Distributed by Random House
www.shambhala.com

News from Indra's Net

Sri Lanka Peace March

An estimated 150,000 people marched in Colombo on August 29, 1999 in what some observers have called the largest peace demonstration of the decade. Marchers came from as many as 10,000 villages and towns across the nation to demand an end to the country's 16-year civil war. Clad in white and marching in silence, the orderly procession gathered in a city park for meditation and prayer. The march received widespread coverage in the Sri Lankan media, and government and political leaders announced their public support for a people's initiative.

The march was organized by Dr. A.T. Ariyaratne, winner of the 1996 Gandhi Peace Prize and a world-renowned pioneer in grassroots community development. Ariyaratne, head of the Sarvodaya Movement, has avoided politics in the past. But with the war in its sixteenth year and no peace settlement in sight, he now calls for a "people's initiative" to end the war. He said this would be the first of 50 peace marches sponsored by his organization.

Ariyaratne is critical of the government's refusal to negotiate with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and its "war for peace" policy. Neither the government nor the rebels has been willing to engage in serious peace negotiations since a cease-fire agreement between them broke down in 1995. LTTE rebels have been fighting for a separate homeland for Sri Lanka's ethnic Tamil minority since 1983. At least 60,000 people have died in the civil war, and over one million people have become refugees from the conflict.

"War can never bring peace," Ariyaratne said. He called for a "meditational war," a campaign of nonviolence, to bring both sides to the negotiating table. This event inaugurated a new era for the Sarvodaya organization, which has never before mobilized supporters for a particular national cause.

Source: Sarvodaya/D. J. Mitchell

• To learn more about the Sarvodaya Movement: Sarvodaya USA, 153 Fourth St., St. James, NY 11780, ph: 516/584-7630, fax: 516/737-4666, email: susa@erols.com, web: www.sarvodaya.org/susa.html

Burma: Nonviolence, Sanctions, and Tourists

Five gunmen took over Myanmar's (Burma's) embassy in Bangkok on October 1, 1999. Holding 38 hostages, they demanded the release of political prisoners in their homeland and the convening of a Parliament reflecting the 1990 election victory of the National League for Democracy (NLD). They also asked for a helicopter to take them to the Thai-Myanmar border. The situation ended peacefully as the five, all students, were taken to the border and all hostages were released unharmed.

Aung San Suu Kyi, head of the NLD, condemned the takeover, though she expressed sympathy for the students. She reaffirmed NLD's commitment to nonviolence: "We want to show that the human spirit can prevail over the might of arms and bring about the change that we want." The embassy incident signals dissension in the Burmese opposition: some have faith that tough international sanctions will work; others call for armed struggle.

Following the takeover, Thailand started to expel "illegal" immigrants, most of them Burmese seeking work or fleeing their murderous government. Thai police taking 300 Burmese in speedboats to the Burmese side of the Moei river had to turn back, as the Myanmar border guards threatened to shoot the returnees.

Only a few countries have imposed sanctions on Burma. In 1997 President Clinton banned new investments by U.S. companies, but most Asian countries are eager to trade with Burma. In support of the Burmese people, about 25 U.S. cities forbid contracts with companies that do business with Burma, and many companies have pulled out of Burma in the past four years. The claim that continuing to do business with a country promotes democracy ("constructive engagement") is rejected by Suu Kyi, who says investors "only serve to prolong the agony of my country, by encouraging the present military regime to persist in its intransigence." She does believe in the efficacy of sanctions.

"Having driven the economy into the ground" (in Madeleine Albright's words), the junta is trying hard to promote tourism. Suu Kyi has repeatedly spoken against tourism. The hard currency that tourists bring is spent on armaments. "Beautification projects" designed to attract tourists rely on forced labor, a practice so widespread that Burma was expelled from the International Labor Organization, the first such action in the group's 60-year history.

Those who want to study Buddhism in Burma should learn all they can about the political situation. Students of Buddhism come on a "pilgrim" visa (not a tourist visa) and so are not obliged to change dollars. Even so, their presence may reinforce the legitimacy of the regime.

Source: Free Burma Coalition

✍ Action Alert! ✍

• Best Western Hotels represents the Kandawgyi Palace Hotel, "uniquely located on the tranquil Royal Lake," where the military drowned many during the 1988 uprising. Write CEO Ronald Evans at Best Western International, P.O. Box 10203, Phoenix, AZ 85064-0203, to demand that they stop doing business in Burma.

• To learn more about Burma, visit the "Free Burma Coalition" website: www.freeburmacoalition.org

Jubilee 2000: Debt Forgiveness

"Debt is tearing down schools, clinics, and hospitals, and the effects are no less devastating than war." So says development expert Adebayo Adedeji of the debt owed international lenders by his country, Nigeria; and all through Africa, Asia, and Latin America, the poorest countries divert essential resources to repay such debt. The United Nations Development Program stated in 1997 that in Africa alone, funds pledged to repayment could be used to save the lives of about 21 million children and provide access to basic education for 90 million girls and women.

The debt is owed the world's wealthiest nations, international financial institutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, and private banks. The IMF and the World Bank will not make loans unless governments reduce spending on social needs, embrace free trade, and shift production to export commodities. The All-Africa Conference of Churches called such programs "immoral in that they care nothing about the suffering of people."

Because prices of their exports (such as coffee and oil) have tumbled in recent years, and interest rates are set at 10–15 percent for poor borrowers (compared to 3–5 percent for wealthy countries), debtor countries have been unable to pay even the loan interest. Thus, although developing countries repaid four times the amounts borrowed between 1982 and 1998, their debt keeps rising.

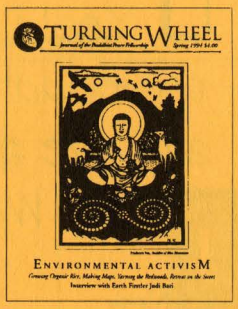
Lenders have announced a few steps toward relief, but these are often illusory. Last June, the G7 (the world's seven richest countries) trumpeted a 90 percent cancellation. But this applied only to a small portion of government-to-government debt, not to that owed major creditors, and only to extremely poor countries. In the end, the proposal affects only about 2 percent of the debt.

Jubilee 2000 is an international movement to cancel the debt of the world's poorest countries by the year 2000, inspired by the Biblical law (Leviticus 25) proclaiming every 50th year a Jubilee year, in which slaves would be freed, land returned to original owners, and debts canceled. At this year's G7 meeting, Jubilee 2000 presented petitions with 17 million signatures demanding debt relief. Advocates, including the Pope, have spurred action on debt relief. Several bills have been introduced in Congress and President Clinton has requested almost $1 billion to cancel the debt of the poorest countries, but Congress only appropriated $110 million—not even a half of one percent of the money owed the United States by the Third World.

Source: Jubilee 2000

- Visit the Jubilee 2000 website: <www.j2000usa.org/debt.html> for action ideas, or contact Jubilee 2000 USA, 222 East Capitol St. N.E., Washington, DC 20003-1036, ph: 202/783-3566, fax: 202/546-4468, email: <coord@j2000usa.org>.
- Call President Clinton at 202/456-1111 to encourage him to pursue debt relief.

❑ Yes! I would like to join the Buddhist Peace Fellowship and receive a subscription to *Turning Wheel*.



❑ New ❑ Renewal

❑ $35 – 1 year ❑ $65 – 2 years ❑ $90 – 3 years

❑ $20 – Simple Living/Low Income/Student (1 year)

Outside of the U.S. please add $5/year.

❑ Payment Enclosed ❑ Visa ❑ Mastercard

Card #:_____ Exp. Date:_____

Signature:_____

Name_____

Address_____

City/State/Zip_____

Country_____

Phone_____

Use the reverse to give a gift subscription!

Please send card and payment to:

Buddhist Peace Fellowship
P.O. Box 4650
Berkeley, CA 94704-0650.

Credit card orders, call or fax us at:
Tel. (510) 655-6169; Fax. (510) 655-1369.

printed on recycled paper

Tibetan Monk Dies After Repeated Beatings

Ngawang Jinpa, a Ganden Monastery monk who had been imprisoned in Drapchi, Tibet, died on May 20, 1999 in Phenpo County, his hometown. He was 31 years old.

Ngawang's health began to deteriorate after he was arrested, with 43 other monks, at Ganden Monastery in May, 1996 during a raid conducted by Chinese authorities. The day before, hundreds of monks had thrown out a team of Chinese officials who had instructed them to take down pictures of the Dalai Lama. Chinese soldiers reportedly shot five monks, resulting in the death of one monk and severe injuries to the others.

Upon their arrests, the monks, including Ngawang, were detained at Gutsa Detention Center where they were reportedly beaten and tortured. In January 1997, 25 monks were tried by the Lhasa Intermediate People's Court. The Court sentenced Ngawang to 12 years in prison and deprived him of his political rights for four years on the charge of having participated in "counter-revolutionary" activities.

In March 1999, Ngawang's health grew so poor that the Chinese authorities took him to a military hospital where he was diagnosed with brain damage. The doctors extracted fluid from his spine, a painful procedure to treat raised intra-cranial pressure, a condition that can result from repeated blows on the head. Ngawang's condition was so hopeless that the Chinese authorities released him on medical parole in March, 1999. He died two months later. Ngawang's abuse and death is a reminder of the ongoing persecution of Tibetan monks and nuns by the Chinese military.

Source: Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy

Letters, continued

As for charges about "Pentagon control of the media," Western newscasters were broadcasting from Serbia throughout the conflict. Investigations of genocide, now progressing throughout Kosovo, are turning over evidence to the International Tribunal for prosecution.

Finally, are children being taught that "difficult conflicts must be resolved by force"? Or are they learning that sometimes bullies must be opposed by force, although possibly at terrible cost, and although force (in itself) will not truly "solve" the conflict.

—Rick Wicks, Goteborg, Sweden

❦ ❦ ❦

Correction:

In the Fall '99 *TW*, a small portion of Louise Dunlap's article was omitted. On page 23, the second and third sentences of the fourth paragraph should read: "As a political activist for many years, it's no longer enough to organize and speak out. The physical discipline of walking, the practice of chanting with the drum...all of these become my "cushion," the grounding from which I draw new energy and insight."

Ecology Column

Natural Time

by Stephanie Kaza

The dark lid of November is upon us. Every year at the end of October the days seem to shrink dramatically, even melodramatically. What was a manageable day length suddenly feels like a meager scrap of light, not really enough. Is this all there is? Here in northern Vermont the sun now rises at 7 AM and sets at 4:30 PM—earlier on a stormy day. It's hard to get up in the morning and it's impossible to get home before dark. The schedule of classes and meetings goes on relentlessly, as if the days were all still the same measure. Hungry for more sun, I squirm and resist, wishing the season were some other way.

November 1st marks the beginning of the darkest quarter of the year; it's not over until February 2nd. During this time, a wish for more light is futile. The main offering is darkness. The season's koan is how to enter that darkness with curiosity instead of dread. This requires a certain bowing down to the larger forces that guide all living creatures, people included. Bears start to put on fat, preparing for hibernation. Northern trees give up on photosynthesis and go dormant. People, oddly enough, still keep going with the same calendars, expecting to fit just as many things into any given day. Even Zen centers keep the same meditation schedule through all the seasons!

When I attended a sesshin at Shasta Abbey in northern California one December, I was surprised to discover that this center adjusted its daily schedule to the seasons. Morning meditation began a half hour before first light, and ended at sunrise. The sitting was tied to the natural rhythm of the day rather than to a corporately imposed regimen. Made sense to me. Thus, zazen practice invited us to taste the truth of interdependence directly. From my scant observations of various centers, this seems to be the exception rather than the rule.

Some religions make alignment with natural rhythms of the day a central part of religious practice. One of the five pillars of Islamic practice is the call to prayer five times a day. The first call is at sunrise, the last at sunset. All Muslims mark this rhythm every day by lowering their bodies to the earth. Celtic traditions worked closely with the year calendar, celebrating the extreme points of the sun at Winter and Summer Solstice, the midpoints at Fall and Spring Equinox, and the cross-quarter days midway between the two (May Day and Halloween, for example).

Days, lunar months, and years are natural time measures, based on the movement of real cosmic bodies. Weeks, hours, and minutes are completely manufactured, arbitrary divisions of time into universally recognizable slots. Industrial society has come to believe strongly in the delusion of precise minutes and the pressure of scheduled appointments. By contrast, Baja time and India time favor a different pacing, based on how people behave or how long it takes to do something. Some cultures still move at a noncorporate pace.

Last year, I was happily on sabbatical at this time. The days grew shorter and I chopped more firewood. Less happened in a day. The most important thing I did that fall was to take down the last stalks in the garden and bring the season to a close. It was *so* satisfying. I had followed the whole growing cycle from start to finish; the fields were now ready for rest. Their rest allowed me to rest too. The dark nights called me out to see winter's brilliant stars; the dark curve of the year invited me in to visit the mystery. I didn't have to fight the shift; it just made sense.

Behind the pressures of work deadlines and schedule arrangements, this other, shimmering world of time exists. This world has a much longer history in our bodies; our bodies know what to do with the dark quarter. How, then, can we enter the mystery and remember its gifts? Letting go of the light, I wrap myself up in the black shawl. There is no choice, really, but just to go in, opening the heart to winter. ❖

Family Practice Column

The Squeeze

by Mushim Ikeda-Nash

"This place of the squeeze is the very point in our meditation and in our lives where we can really learn something." —Pema Chödrön, *When Things Fall Apart*

Time, like money, is something that families can fight over. Almost everyone I know who is raising children complains about being too busy. I used to read in parenting magazines about the need to schedule "quality time"—quiet, focused time to "just" play or be—with one's children, but when my son was very young I was always exhausted and overworked. As a toddler, Josh had his own "schedule"; he knew nothing of mine. If I'd finished the dishes, picked things up off the floor, and gathered what remained of my wits, it always seemed that just at that point my kid would fall asleep, or would busy himself pulling things off the shelves I had just organized. And trying to go grocery shopping or wash clothes at the laundromat with a toddler pulling my hair and chanting his latest word, mantra-like, often seemed near to impossible. Almost every day I would feel as though my head and lungs were in a vise that was slowly being tightened by a giant hand. I would panic and call my husband at work. Chris was always sympathetic and kind, even when he was having a hard day himself. "Try to get some fresh air, heroic honey," he'd say. "Put Josh in the stroller and get out of the house for awhile."

For the past ten years of Josh's life, I've had to learn how to deal with feeling constantly rushed and overwhelmed. When I feel the vise beginning to squeeze, I know that if I don't remember my practice, I'll instantly become something I truly dislike: the nagging mother-wife. I've developed my own koan for such moments: I ask myself, *What's truly important here?*

This question emerges again and again, when I am squeezed between what I want my family life to look like and what it really is, in that moment when I feel most frantic and judgmental. On a typical weekend, I envision Saturday as a good time for Chris to change the oil in the car or help wash the kitchen ceiling. Josh should be cleaning his room. Unaware of my plans, Chris comes home from Saturday morning martial arts, strips off his muddy *gi,* and climbs into bed with the newspaper. Before I can protest, he is curled up with Butterscotch the cat, snoring blissfully. Josh is playing "Super Mario Smash Bros" on his Nintendo 64. When I ask him to pick crumpled drawings off his floor he mumbles "Later," and doesn't move. When I lived in Zen temples everything was always tidy, and people were obedient and diligent, following the schedule. These guys I'm living with now are shiftless slobs, obstacles in my spiritual path!

Through what karma have my husband, son, and I come together? And what's truly important here? When Joshua was born, and before the umbilical cord was cut, the doctor placed him in my hands. I looked deeply into his eyes, and *"Yes, I know you!"* flashed between us in that first glance. It was a moment of absolute certainty for me, as though my child had emerged from a dark tunnel of many lifetimes, and in the brightness of the light outside my body we greeted each other as old, old friends.

So, what's truly important here? Chris has worked long hours every day this week. Josh has had a hectic week in fifth grade. And no one, especially me, likes to feel pressured on the weekend. Giving up on the kitchen ceiling, I kiss my husband, and knock on Josh's bedroom door.

"How's the video game?" I ask, sitting down next to him. I remember the long Sunday afternoons when my mother would sit down on the floor and play double solitaire with me when I was a kid. We'd slap down the cards, exchanging friendly jibes and laughing like mad. She worked full-time as a pharmacist, but she always seemed to enjoy being with me.

Suddenly, Josh grabs my head, and gently squeezes it. "I love you very much," he says, placing his warm cheek next to mine. "Want to play?" ❖

History Column

Takenaka Shogan

by Diane Patenaude Ames

It was 1937. The fascist government of Japan was once again invading China. Japanese youths by the thousands were being marched off to a doubtful fate, with the government-controlled media cheering their departure. Organized Buddhism, like organized religion in almost all times and places, also gave its blessing to the government's war. But here and there, Buddhists protested.

In Gifu Prefecture, Takenaka Shogan (1866-1945), the head priest of a rural Shin temple called Mysosenji, decided to speak his mind. This, it should be understood, was unusual behavior in a Shin priest even in peacetime. For centuries, the authorities had discouraged the priests from discussing anything but the Buddhist afterlife in their infrequent sermons; and most had complied. Now, although the fascist police were unpredictable in their treatment of dissidents, everybody knew that protest could be dangerous. People were already being arbitrarily arrested, and some of them never got out of jail alive. (Later, in 1941, at least one Soto Zen master disappeared after making antiwar statements.) So it must have been with some surprise that Takenaka's congregation heard him declare, "War is both sinful and, at the same time, the enemy of humanity; it should be stopped. In both northern China and Shanghai, [Japan] should stop with what it has already occupied. War is never a benefit to a nation."

Predictably, some parishioners considered Takenaka's remarks unpatriotic and told him so. The fuss attracted the baleful attention of the police. But despite—or maybe because of—the fact that he was seventy-one years old, Takenaka Shogan refused to shut up. On October 10, 1937, he said in an address to six other Shin priests:

> I don't know what others may think about the recent trouble [in China], but it looks to me like aggression. From a Mahayana point of view, it is improper to deprive either oneself or others of their lives...War is the greatest sin there is.

That did it. In December, Takenaka was formally charged with spreading "fabrications and wild rumor," which was fascist legalese for saying something that the government did not want said. This was a serious charge, but luckily the local authorities did not consider him a real threat. The record does not indicate that he was mistreated, and he got a trial worthy of the name. In the end, the court did not want to martyr an old man whom the fascists considered a pious nut. He got off with the equivalent of probation but was kept under special police surveillance until the war ended in 1945. Later that year, he died, having shown more courage than many of the soldiers in the catastrophic war he had denounced. ❖

Prison Page

Time On and Off the Zafu

by Diana Lion

Last night in my weekly San Francisco jail meditation class, one man spoke very quietly during check-in. I strained to hear as he confessed he was in on drug charges, and his drug-dealer self never would have imagined being in a class like this. He wanted us to know how uncomfortable it had been for him at first. But—and his voice got even lower—he figured when he started being a drug dealer, he felt very uncomfortable too. And it was only by lots of repetition that he had grown comfortable with what he had had to do as a dealer. So he guessed that he could do the same thing with meditation: repeat it until he was used to it. Then he shifted to face me squarely and said: "I want—no, I need—to turn my life around."

One thing we emphasize in these classes—and anyone who has been meditating for a while knows this—meditation is not a panacea. Beginner's enthusiasm does not necessarily last, and we may sometimes hit walls in our practice. But if we stick with it for a period of years, we may look back and notice shifts that have happened almost imperceptibly.

Over the months, people during check-in have described the common prisoners' agonies of waiting, continuances, and months of not-knowing in their trial processes. To a man, they have said that meditation has helped them through these frustrations.

The class glowed with a welcome back for me after several weeks' absence because of the unexpected death of my brother. We have a custom of dedicating each class to guys about to be released and any other people we want to bring into our circle. One man told me my brother and I had been remembered each week I was gone, even though the turnover in the jail can be so rapid that by the time I came back I only knew one man in the class. Another participant had written an acrostic poem, using my teaching partner's and my names down the side of the page, and had dedicated it to my brother—before ever having met me. Lifers I have worked with in San Quentin also sent me group cards filled with supportive messages after hearing of my brother's death. These are some of the "heartless demons" we are locking up.

Contemplation is one aspect of liberation work. For BPF's prison project, this goes hand in hand with advocacy to address the root causes of violence. We are facing increasingly harsh legislation, particularly against youth. Here in California, the "Gang Violence and Juvenile Crime Prevention Act" (Proposition 21) is due to be on the ballot in March 2000. This initiative broadens the bases under which youth can be tried as adults, requires more youth to be sent to adult institutions, expands the list of "Three Strike" offenses, and tightens the legal noose around gang activities. It effectively undoes the advances made a hundred years ago in treating young people differently from adults, and responds to tragedies like the Columbine massacre by demonizing teenagers.

But the American public does not realize that in the last few years youth violence has been decreasing, even as the youth population is growing. Felony offenses committed by 10- to 17-year-olds decreased by 19.1 percent in 1997, and by 11.2 percent for 18- and 19-year-olds (Justice Policy Institute). As for Three Strikes, statistics show that the crime rate is unaffected in the counties that apply this law. For example, Santa Clara, one of the six counties with the heaviest sentences, actually experienced a rise in violent crime after implementing the law; whereas San Francisco, which uses the law the most sparingly, had a decline in violent crime (American Friends Service Committee Criminal Justice Division).

Young people who grow up in families with one or two incarcerated parents are more likely to end up in jail themselves. Our national and state budgets are shifting billions of dollars from education to prisons. Because our children have difficulty getting educated, and jobs are decreasingly available for people without education, there is an increased turning towards illegal ways of making a living. Meanwhile, many working-class jobs have been shifted to underpaid workers in Third World countries. The circles intersect: we all pay a high price for the inequities that were once seen as affecting only a small sector of our population. And damage is done to our collective heart when we turn our backs on 1.8 million incarcerated Americans, and approximately 3.2 million more Americans who are on parole, probation, or in juvenile detention. ❖

A message from Sangha X to all ex-prisoners:

Please join us as we support each other through the difficult time of re-entry, recovery, and spiritual reclamation. Our transitional sitting group meets Sunday and Thursday evenings, from 6–9 PM, in San Francisco. Call Carl at 415/648-4304 for more information.

❦ Job Opening ❦

The Prison Project wants to hire someone with good organizational and administrative skills to work in the office for 15 hours/week. Please send resumés to Diana Lion, at BPF, by January 10, 2000. Ex-prisoners and people of color are encouraged to apply.

ENCOUNTERING CONSUMERISM

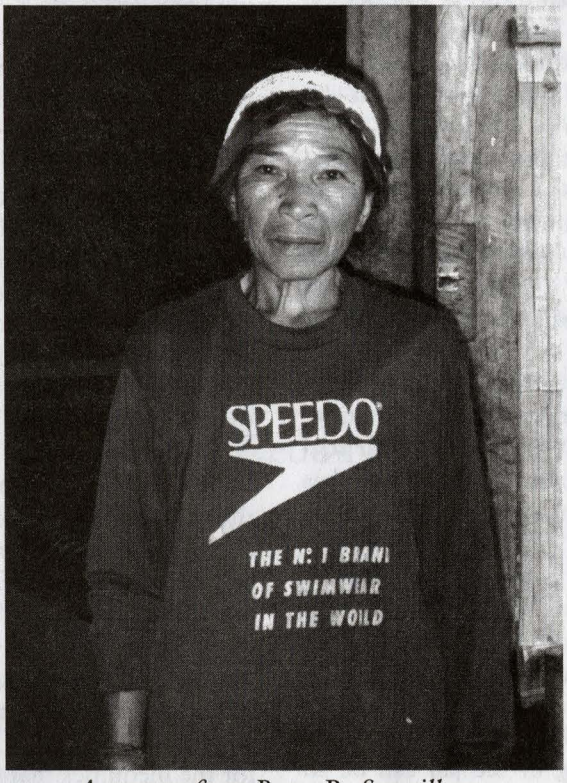
Inner and Outer Journeys in Thailand

by Trena Cleland

It's our first hour in Baan Pa Sae village, in the highland region of northern Thailand, and I wander off by myself to explore. I try not to use my camera much, but practically the first image I see as I walk down the dirt path becomes my first photo of this place.

In the foreground stands a thatched-roof hut, its eaves reaching nearly to the ground. Beyond it, a lush bamboo grove shines green in the sunlight. A length of rope hung with freshly washed sheets and shirts cuts through the trees. Behind the grove, looming in the background, is an enormous satellite dish.

In the hill tribe villages of the Golden Triangle, the traditional and modern can be found side by side in almost every frame. A color television sits below an altar to the Buddha. A Thai boy, sunglasses perched on his head, comes in from herding water buffalo and picks up a remote control device. A wizened elder sports a Speedo tee-shirt beneath her ornamental headdress.



A woman from Baan Pa Sae village

Twenty of us are here on an Interfaith Solidarity Walk, meeting with the indigenous peoples of this region, staying in their homes, and bearing witness to the effects of modernization—especially consumer culture—on their lives. Most of our group are from the United States and Western Europe, but there are two community organizers from India, a former guerrilla fighter from Burma, and several Thai citizens among us, including three orange-robed Buddhist monks. We've all just come from an international gathering on Alternatives to Consumerism that took place near Bangkok. We traveled by bus to this area, were dropped at a trailhead, and are now wending our way from village to village along a jungle footpath.

Our hosts are from the Lahu, Lisu, Yunan, and Akha ethnic groups, which emigrated from China, Burma, and Laos in the last 150 years. The land they have traditionally cultivated with rice, maize, and opium-producing poppies is under pressure from population growth and changing land-use policies, and their close-knit communities are threatened by increasing contact with the outside world.

Baan Pa Sae is small and dusty, dotted with thatched-roof huts that surround a concrete public bathroom. In it is a porcelain American Standard squat toilet. Outside, there is a giant metal water cistern at which the villagers bathe. As we walk into the village through the ceremonial gate topped with the dried carcass of a dog, children run out to greet us. Some of their faces are solemn and puzzled, others are wreathed in smiles. Children and adults alike wear Western tee-shirts—Bad Boy, Top Gun, Tommy Hilfiger, Reebok—with their jeans or sarongs.

The village headman comes to greet us, and waves us to a small clearing at the village's center. Local women bring out platters bearing succulent slices of mango, papaya, banana, tamarind, and casaba. Walkers and villagers eye each other covertly, and exchange shy smiles and greetings.

Later, we are divided into small groups and sent off to the homes of various village hosts. Christine, Zarina, and I are taken together to a large bamboo hut with a dirt floor that is divided into several sections with hanging fabric. Our host father ushers us to a mat-covered sleeping platform and turns on a Thai pop music cassette in a bedside boombox for us to enjoy while we rest. When he leaves, we whisper among ourselves about whether it would seem ungrateful to turn it off. We finally settle for turning down the volume in increments, hoping no one will notice.

That evening, we gather with the villagers back in the square to introduce ourselves and engage in a free-flowing conversation. The dialogue, which resembles a question-and-answer session at a grade-school assembly, is translated from English to Thai and from Thai into the local dialect, then back again. The gist of what the Westerners say is, "We admire your strong local communities and connection to the land. In the West, we

have all the stuff you see on TV, but we also have crime, pollution, and loneliness. People live far away from their families. Often we don't know our neighbors. We want to see how people can live more simply, more communally, more harmoniously." After these noble speeches from the visiting *farangs*, it is the villagers' turn to speak. "Why are you so tall and white?" they ask us. "How do you like our country?"

Afterwards, everyone huddles around a TV to watch a video documentary about the threats to this tribe's traditional ways of life.

Back at the hut, we three women get into bed while the children of the family watch a Thai soap opera on TV. When the show is over, they wander off, leaving a fluorescent light on over our heads. This time, incremental adjustment is not an option. As the household settles into sleep and the sickly light buzzes, we pull our sleeping bags up over our faces and squeeze our eyes shut.

❦ ❦ ❦

In these villages, the new day is heralded well before dawn by roosters, some of whom seem to reside directly under the hut. They set off a cacophony from the animal kingdom. Dogs bark, cows and pigs stir and grunt, chickens squawk and peck. Adults rise to light cooking fires and prepare the morning meal.

At breakfast, as at every meal, grown-in-the-village rice is a staple. (At least one household uses an electric rice-cooker.) Almost all of the food we are served is grown here. There is bamboo in various forms, boiled greens, dried fish, pickled horseradish, tiny eggplants, potatoes, yams, starchy corn on the cob, tamari crisps, and tofu, surrounded by bowls of spicy chilies. The beverages—tea and Nescafé—are less exotic to us.

After breakfast, we go on a walk around the village with some of the local men, ending at the spirit altar garden. We're told that the men come to this garden—no women are allowed—to ask for blessings for their families from the ancestral spirits. Traditionally, the spirits were asked to look kindly on a new spouse or child, or thanked for the arrival of a pig. Nowadays, our guide mentions, people sometimes pray for a blessing on their new motorcycle or pickup truck.

This reference to the merging of *spirit* and *stuff* turns my thoughts to the Alternatives to Consumerism Conference we've just attended. Sulak Sivaraksa, a leading Thai activist and social critic, had labeled Western-style consumerism "the new religion." He warned that the modern philosophy of life is based not in the mind ("I think, therefore I am," as Descartes had it) but in the pocketbook: "I buy, therefore I am."

As so-called "free" trade breaks down national barriers, the consumer juggernaut follows close behind, encouraging lifestyles based on over-consumption, and promising personal power and comfort. Multinational corporations promote happiness through material acquisition; the "good life" is defined as winning a big car on a TV game show or lounging around in front of a swimming pool. An individual's feeling of self-worth, ideally grounded in inner peace and in relationships with others and the earth, is increasingly based on the possession of commodities.

One result is that small-scale, land-based economies are rapidly being dismantled as rural people—such as some of the young adults from Baan Pa Sae—migrate en masse to crowded, poverty-stricken urban areas in a usually futile search for money and possessions.

At the conference, feminist theologian Rosemary Ruether likened Western-style capitalism to a bus that is careening through every tiny hamlet on the globe, crashing into traditional ways and spreading the disease of "affluenza." Ruether sees those of us from the West who promote simplicity as a well-intentioned group that sits in the back of the bus, sharing our vegetarian sandwiches, wearing second-hand clothes, and recycling our paper. We try in our small ways to make a difference, but we don't sufficiently challenge the economic forces that determine the course of the bus. We—Americans especially—are part of the capitalist system that benefits us, and the modest changes we make are within that context.

The bus metaphor stimulates excited debate at the conference. Can we get off the bus—live off the grid, eat food we grow ourselves, reject mass media? The more we talk about it, the less realistic it seems. That bus, which represents the cultural worldview we absorbed in the womb, may be impossible to step off. As Helena Norberg-Hodge, one of globalization's most eloquent critics, has written, our values, education, and thought patterns "reflect the world view of *homo industrialis* [in which] Western culture is seen as the normal way, the only way." No matter how much any of us might want to extricate ourselves from the culture of over-consumption, we swim in it—physically and psychologically.

Okay, someone says, even if we can't get *off* the bus, maybe our group can get close enough to the steering wheel to grab it and change the course of the bus. Someone else replies, "Yes, but would any of us know which way to turn the wheel? Who's to say what's best for the rest of the world?"

Gwen, an artist and ecologist, speaks up. "The idea that there's one steering wheel with one driver is probably false. More likely, everyone's connected to that steering wheel. It's our collective creativity and intelligence that's steering the culture."

❦ ❦ ❦

With this metaphor still fresh in our minds and hearts, we are dropped at the Bangkok bus station to catch the bus to northern Thailand. The first thing my radar picks up is a Dunkin' Donuts shop, sandwiched between a 7-11 and a Kentucky Fried Chicken. Quickly, before my conscience can do battle with my desire (and taking a roundabout route so that my friends won't see me), I hurry toward its pink and brown neon lights. The

scene indoors is air-conditioned, antiseptic, English-speaking—*thrilling*. The deep-fat-fried, chocolate-glazed doughnuts are a taste of home. I buy a bag for the road, and hide it in my duffle bag.

Our little group of pilgrims, carrying assorted backpacks and passports, has gathered at a crowded station to embark on an overnight bus trip to the forests of the rural north, where we want to support those who struggle to maintain tribal traditions. But first, we will travel in air-conditioned comfort on the Luxury Express. We clamber aboard.

A TV positioned above the driver's head brings us back to the world of network news—the announcers sweetly introduce themselves with a *wai* (bow)—and shrill commercials. Outside the bus, Bangkok traffic is choked. The cars move more slowly than the pedestrians, and the air is blue with exhaust. We pass gargantuan shopping centers, bedecked with twinkling pine trees and roadside displays of huge wrapped gifts, heralding the Christmas season in this Buddhist country. Four gigantic billboards in a row bellow a single-word mantra: SONY.

The bus hostess offers us Fanta cherry soda, cellophane-wrapped buns in cardboard boxes, and a choice of action videos from the United States. Forced to choose, we pick the most benign: *Jurassic Park*. Tearing open our plastic-wrapped bus blankets, we hunker down for the 12-hour ride to Chiang Rai Province.

❦ ❦ ❦

Over the next few days of our walk between villages, I eat my bag of Dunkin' Donuts in fits and starts—furtively, while tromping through rice paddies or under cover of darkness in a villager's hut. When I finally finish them off, I add other trash to the sticky Dunkin' Donuts bag. The pink and brown sack gets filled with used Wash 'n' Drys, an empty toilet paper roll, plastic film canisters, and some candy wrappers I've picked up on the trail that winds between villages. I planned to leave this collection of throw-aways with my last host, but when reminded that the locals have no way to dispose of it—indeed, they seem to drop their own plastic bottles, bags, and tin cans anywhere and everywhere—I glumly pack it out with me.

That night, we camp in a lush bamboo forest. Our Thai helpers cut long bamboo limbs with their machetes and stuff rice and greens inside the hollow branches, which they cook over the fire. Then they spread huge banana fronds on the ground and pile heaps of food upon them. We eat with our hands, and our dining table is left to degrade on the forest floor.

When I go to bed, I leave my Dunkin' Donuts bag of garbage outside my tent. Overnight, it becomes overrun with tiny black ants. When I emerge in the morning and see the garish bag swarming with hundreds of bugs, a shock of remorse and horror travels deep through my system. It takes me a long moment of staring at the crawling pink plastic to internalize what I am seeing. But there's no denying my desecration of nature, and the absence of a way to make it right again. Sickened, I stuff the bag under a pile of bamboo fronds and slink away, ashamed.

❦ ❦ ❦

The doughnut debacle sends me into a crisis of conscience. Here I've come all the way to Thailand to support earth-based wisdom and a simple, wholesome lifestyle. The truth is, I can barely lug my own backpack, it's so full of possessions, and now I've despoiled the forest. Trying to walk lightly on the Earth, I trod heavily with every step.

I worry that my trip is little more than "experiential" consumerism. Does anyone but me benefit from my presence here? Am I just gobbling up more adventures to add to my personal portfolio?

When I ask Sulak Sivaraksa how he reconciles the contradiction of flying to many countries, far from his home in Thailand, to encourage people to live more sustainable lives rooted in community and nature, he answers, "I struggle with this all the time. Am I a hypocrite? I wonder. I don't know what the answer is. I try to be humble and make the best decisions I can."

A Thai boy, sunglasses perched on his head, comes in from herding water buffalo and picks up a remote control device.

Am I—are we—part of the solution, or part of the problem? Is our Solidarity Walk helping or hurting the tribal people? Tuanjai Deetes, a community organizer who works to empower tribal culture, is both gentle and pragmatic in her response. "There will always be some positive and some negative impacts of visitors," she says. "But if we don't step forward on the Earth, why be born?"

❦ ❦ ❦

One evening, after an afternoon spent helping our hostesses chop brush with machetes, several of us sit around in a dark hut with 15 villagers. The men dominate, sitting in a circle around an indoor fire; the women squat in the doorway and just outside it, with silent children on their laps and backs. We talk languidly. Some men smoke.

One of our group looks up at the tall domed ceiling of the hut ands asks the men about Akha building materials. Everything is made of bamboo, they tell us: cups, firewood, walking sticks, floors, houses. They go to the forest to gather bamboo to build their strong homes. "Using strong woods would destroy the forest," one man says. "But bamboo is easy to grow."

These villagers are realistic about the pros and cons of development. They sometimes feel that they want TVs, lights, and refrigerators like the neighboring village, but they realize they'd have to work hard to maintain these amenities. They prefer to work simply and

"to their natural capacity," in the words of one man. Besides, he says, TVs and fridges "don't fit into our lives."

One man tells us a legend about a dog that saved the village from famine by going far away and bringing back three grains of rice on its tail. "Do you have any legends about dogs?" he asks. His tone is serious, and the answer feels important. *Legends? About dogs?* I rack my brain. All I can think of are Lassie and Rin Tin Tin. Thankfully, Chris comes to the rescue. "In our country, dogs supposedly are 'man's best friend,'" she says. "They go around with the family and sleep on their beds. They have their own doctors and hairdressers. Some even have psychiatrists!" she laughs.

Trena Cleland eating a meal served on banana fronds

The men look steadily into the fire. I feel almost embarrassed for our group. *They think we're ridiculous.* "We also have Seeing-Eye dogs," Chris remembers to add. I'm relieved. *Seeing is good*, I think.

After a couple of hours, we all wander outside together and folk dance slowly under a full moon.

❦ ❦ ❦

Our breath competes for our mind's attention with the yowl of dogs, screeching of roosters, and *thump thump* of an electric bass issuing from a distant boombox. The balcony on which we sit, encircling the three monks who travel with us, thrusts out over a pristine vista of hills and valleys. Phra Paison, a gentle and intellectual monk whose looks and demeanor remind me greatly of my own father—a longtime peace activist in Chicago—says some simple opening words for our morning sitting.

The mind wanders like a homeless child. During meditation, we provide a home for our mind to return to. The breath provides it with a resting place. When the mind realizes this, it will come back home.

I love the image. Before finding my breath and dropping into it, I think fondly of my sleeping pad. Before I know it, my brain calculates a quick translation: *My breath is a ThermaRest for my mind to take a nap upon.* At first I laugh to myself, seeing how even the simple act of resting comes with brand-name identification. Then I remember Rosemary Reuther's comment about how advertising colonizes people's minds, and I hurry back to following my breath.

When we open our eyes at the end of the *metta* (loving-kindness) meditation, the last of the late afternoon sun is slanting across the monks, and we gather back in the square to hang out before supper. A couple of village women wander over and dangle gaudy beaded necklaces hopefully in our direction. Vicki decides to buy one for a few *baht*—a memento, she announces, of the fun she's had that day with Anunca, one of the local children. Once her money is pulled out and the sale is made, the floodgates of commerce suddenly break open. The other women in the square hurry to their huts, pulling out beaded jackets, vests, hats, and necklaces, and rushing back to the walkers, who begin comparing prices and bargaining down the sellers.

My own hostess, seeing me eye a beaded jacket, vigorously shakes her hand in my face and points to herself, then up the hill to her hut: *You buy from me.* As more and more jackets appear and are even modeled by the local women—one of whom waggles her rear end to demonstrate the jingle of her jacket's shells—the spectacle becomes increasingly depressing. A seemingly benign exchange of resources has turned to cut-throat competition: us against them, them against each other.

The introduction of coarse commerce into our relationships is a disturbing phenomenon, of exactly the consumerism that has been the focus of our trip. All we'd wanted to do was have a direct and courteous exchange with these craftswomen. The women see that we value their traditional crafts, we leave with original handwork rather than plastic junk or opium, and no one loses out to a Bangkok middleman. But a feeding frenzy in which villagers practically grab coins out of our hands doesn't feel quite so noble.

We walkers gather the next morning to talk about it. There is a mix of frustration, matter-of-factness, and sorrow in the group. We've stumbled into a teaching story, but what is its message?

We console ourselves with the thought that most tourists come to give out candy, take pictures, buy dope, and shop. "They want to buy the culture but not participate in it," someone says. We feel we have a deeper purpose: to show respect for indigenous people's lives and practices. Yet just what it means to show respect is murkier than we realized. Though bargaining and haggling are part of hill tribe culture, our participation in it doesn't feel clean for some of us.

Although cash, like a match thrown into tinder, affect our relationships with our new friends, our *intentions* are good. "We can't control everything," Vicki says, "but we can control that." "Who knows?" Todd says. "Maybe the trade-off is worth it. That these women are here at all, raising their children and selling their crafts to us, is better than them moving to the slums of Bangkok and losing the knowledge of their traditional art forms."

We end our soul-searching with more questions than answers, and recommit to walking with respect and compassion for ourselves and others. *May we learn from the challenges we experience. They keep us alive!*

❦ ❦ ❦

For the Akha tribe, which in Thailand numbers about 80,000 people, elaborate ceremonies serve to maintain equilibrium between themselves and the cosmos. Everything—people, bamboo, money, guns, pigs, streams—has an "in-dwelling essence" that must be paid great respect. These villagers ask blessings from spirits to raise chickens, cut trees, and lay drainpipes.

The forest is a wise entity that is loved and respected as a home. It is the location of sacred sites and the source of basic needs: water, food, medicine, timber, fuel, and ceremonial plants. As Akha people walk through the forest, they sing the stories of their lives, expressing the thoughts and feelings they have at that moment. Together, humans and the rest of the natural world form an integrated whole.

It is believed that the ancestors maintain an active interest in the living, and that modern people must turn to them for guidance. Each Akha man and woman can recite the names of his or her male ancestors back 54 generations—1,000 years—to the first Akha man.

But traditional Akha culture is on the wane. In a documentary film, a tribesman describes the situation.

> Akha customs are difficult and complex. People like easy things nowadays, so the Akha customs are made easier than before, and practiced less. The unity of the village is shaken. The children go to school and learn many things about the culture and systems of mainstream society outside the village, and spend little time staying with the parents to learn about life, philosophies, and values as the children of the past used to do.

In Ah Baar, an Akha village, four elders meet with us after lunch and a nap. We are told that they are the only ones left here who practice the tribal rituals. Outside the hut, poles strung with electric cable run the length of the village's dirt road, powering a fan that wheezes loudly in a corner. Occasionally, a motorbike roars by.

Until recently, the elders tell us, the roads out of their village were very bad. They walked on foot just once or twice a year to Mae Jong, the only marketplace, and grew most of their food themselves. Now, almost half of their food is brought from the outside. Instead of only wooden huts with thatched roofs, there are now some concrete buildings and tin roofs.

There have been other changes. Most of the children now attend compulsory Western-style school, which teaches them a national Thai curriculum. This mandatory education is now stretching from six years to nine, so the youngsters have to travel to a distant town for secondary school.

The elders tell us: *In the past, the atmosphere of the community was "bright" and "light." We felt no worries. Now, money has become very important to us. We think about how to get it and how to spend it. We worry about earning enough money to send our children to school in the city. TV has influenced the children to dress like city people and pop stars. Fewer are dressing in the traditional way. We see that our economies are interconnected, and it is not so clear how to sustain our lives. The mentality is "darker."*

But dark though it may be, development is never a black or white issue. The elders add that electric lights make it easier for them to move around at night. Television and compulsory schooling help the children to know more about the world. "Everything has good and bad points," one of the old men says. "It all depends on people's abilities to keep the good things and ignore the bad things."

It's easy to see that improved communication, mobility, and exposure to others do have tremendous advantages. But the outside world that brings more knowledge and skills to the culture also corrupts the culture. The motorcycle and the road provide access to other people and resources, yet create pollution and noise.

These paradoxes will not be solved in an afternoon bull session, but no one seems to mind. The elders tell us that they are grateful and delighted that we came to exchange ideas with them. *May you travel safely, and with a light heart.*

❦ ❦ ❦

More and more, a single idea begins to float to the surface of the conversations of those on the Solidarity Walk. It is not, "We need to help the hill tribe people," but rather, "We need to change ourselves." The problems fostered by consumer culture start upstream, in our own villages in the West. We—I—want to be part of helping to change the paradigm of North American society towards more mindful consumption—seeing what we *need*, not just what we want—which could help turn the tide of global consciousness.

As I continue on my path, I take as my credo a phrase that moves me with its simple wisdom: *Life's a journey. Travel light.*

It's from an ad for Hugo Boss perfume. ❖

Trena Cleland is a community activist, an HIV test counselor for the City of Berkeley, and the assistant to author Fritjof Capra. She is also an active member of the BASE Program.

SPEED

by Diana Winston

"Nearly all American drivers agree that running red lights is dangerous, but more than half admit they've done it. Mostly because they were simply in a hurry, a survey found." —San Jose Mercury News, Oct. 7, 1999

"O Son/Daughter of an Enlightened Family, do not be distracted!" —Tibetan Book of the Dead

In my early twenties, when I was unemployed and living in New York City, I had a ritual for myself. I would go to Grand Central Station at evening rush hour, plant myself in a busy intersection crammed with people running for trains and subways, and simply watch. The giant underground room was a whirl of bodies in dark overcoats zooming past each other with an inexorable sense of importance. They never bumped into each other. Rushing, running, spinning out of control, and I, like a ghost, stood there with nothing to do except watch and wonder.

Years later, immersed in a culture where speed is the order of the day, I too am part of this herd. I too have a datebook that is filled to the brim, and intimacies are bargained into its corners. I hurry from one appointment to the next and the next. I run from planning meetings, to work, to sitting group, to dinner with friends, to the latest movie. Most things I do are "worthwhile," helpful, beneficial to myself and others. I roll into bed at night, exhausted, forgetful. What did I do all day?

Contemporary America: We love fast things. Fast cars, fast meals, microwaves, one-night stands, instant credit, overnight express, cable modems, amphetamines, pizza delivery, McEverything. What did we do before email?

I don't have time to write letters, read books, visit my friend play with my little brother kiss touch sigh dance relate eat ice cream make music cook pray smell meditate take a walk my god make it all stop I don't have time and it's running out and I'm running fast and furiously and I want it to stop ouch it's painful why won't it stop can't you make it stop my god what's wrong with this country have we all gone crazy are we insane we've lost touch we've lost touch we've got to stop this endless running about all I want to do is slow down just crawl into bed and rock myself to sleep not this craziness not this crazy running about I am so tired please somebody you have got to help me stop!

A caveat: I am embedded in a particular class, race, nation, and time in history, so my words don't speak for everyone, everywhere. However, for me, I believe it's a subversive act in this historical moment to slow down. The momentum of the culture sends us careening at breakneck speed. We are experiencing a host of physical and psychological illnesses resulting from our addiction to speed. Running at this rate is actually painful. It's causing wear and tear on our nervous systems, on our bodies and familial relations, on the earth. This is not news.

To slow down is to disassociate myself from the consumer culture that deifies acceleration. Say no thanks to the tyranny of the equation that time = money. No thanks to being a cog in somebody else's wheel. The faster we go, the less we question, and the more we buy. Products/people wear out rapidly and new ones replace them. There's always an upgrade to be had.

I won't take part in that. I refuse. I will slow down. I will take care of myself. I will not buy a faster modem.

On a long retreat, I had so many thoughts cascading through my mind that at midnight I ran laps around the parking lot.

I learned a few lessons when I was in India this year. I made a rule for myself: if I accomplished one thing in the day, I rejoiced. A trip to the bank to exchange money could easily be an all-day undertaking.

Mailing a letter—a story in three acts:

ACT I. 1:00 PM—I leave my house for the post office, pausing for a game of hopscotch with the little girls next door. "Dinah," shouts my neighbor, Mr. Khaitan, "vait, come have some chai. You must hear my new plan." I have known him three months and every week he has a new money-making scheme. Last week it was a day-care center, the week before, a shoe store. Today we chat for twenty minutes over a cup of the deliciously-too-sweet brown liquid. He tells me of his plan to turn his general store into a restaurant. "Dinah, you like pizza, ice cream. I will serve the most excellent meals for Vestern tastes." We discuss the pros, cons, and recipes for spaghetti sauce.

ACT II. 2:00 PM—I jump on my bike and pedal over to the post office. It's still closed for lunch. I wait for the man, on lunch break, whose job is to unlock the postmaster's window. It doesn't matter that there are five other men standing around drinking chai (code word for: doing mostly nothing). The man with the key to the window isn't there. So I sit outside on the porch of the G.P.O. chatting with the postal workers, practice sky gazing, walk down the street to play with the beggar kids. Return to see if the window's open. Alas, still not

back. I scratch a few mosquito bites, buy the *Times of India* and read of the latest mob violence.

ACT III. 4:00 PM—The man with the key returns. He was in a motorcycle accident but he wasn't hurt. The men assume their positions. One man can't find his postage meter. He searches through piles and piles of paper, finds it at last, underneath his tiffin (lunch box) in the left hand drawer. The man-with-the-key unlocks the window, and one of the chai drinkers becomes the postmaster, and sits down on the other side of the window. But my letter won't close. The postmaster hands me the sticky goo that substitutes for glue, and I slop it all over the letter. I rub the excess off my hands, pass the letter to the gentleman, and he stamps it. Finally, I depart victorious. It's 5:00 PM and I have successfully mailed my letter before the post office closes. I feel joy.

When my father picked me up at the airport on my return from Asia, we drove up to a tollbooth. He contemplated out loud: "Well, if I go to the left I should make it through faster, well...unless that bastard tries to cut me off...okay, yeah, we're going to take the left booth."

"Dad," I sighed, "I haven't been home in two years, and you're worried about shaving off 30 seconds of time."

"Diana, you know I'm an efficiency expert."

When I nearly stepped on a toad I was nervous for three hours afterward.

I'm not saying the East is better because things are slow. India has an array of social problems, from overpopulation to religiously-motivated violence, poverty, fanaticism, corruption, and illiteracy. But speed is not one of them. I love India's slowness, although frequently it's infuriating. A 14-hour train ride from Varanasi to Calcutta once took me 28 hours.

How can I keep track of the multitude of information from TV newspaper dailies weeklies alternative journals web email snail mail commercial radio public radio what my friends say posters flyers billboards advertisements magazines books bookstore windows dreams?

In India, I got an email from Sue asking me to write an article for *Turning Wheel* about my time in the monastery in Burma. She wanted it. I wanted to do it. I had a great angle, the outline was all set, I was sure it was an important piece. But the days passed and I never managed to get it done....

It's almost time to leave for Bodhgaya for a ten-day retreat. I have just one day to finish the article. I sit on my porch to consider what to do: I could work on the school's computer, but if there's no electricity, I don't want them to start the generator just for me...I could try the university, but, no, I think they're closed again for some religious holiday...My friends have a laptop, but they're German and the keyboard letters are in all the wrong places...I guess I could rent a computer in Varanasi, but that's a 45-minute ride into town. And without electricity, how can I email this out?...Damn, damn. I could try faxing it but the fax down the road is usually broken....

Until finally I realize that the level of anxiety I'm creating for myself has gotten out of control. My stomach is knotting, I feel panicky, sweaty, nauseated. Suddenly a voice pops into my head: "You know, you don't have to do it." My immediate response: "YES I DO!!! This is a very important article. I am an important person with important things to say!" The first voice repeats, "You don't have to do it." A battle ensues. The self-building voice struggles against the faint, calm voice that urges me to drop it.

Finally I think, "Do you want to write this or do you want to have peace?" At that moment something deep inside me shifts, and I know I have to let go. I take a breath. "I'm not going to write the article," I announce to myself. In seconds I feel a profound sense of peace. The anxiety falls away, and I begin to cry with relief.

All of the things we say we have to do, do we really *have* to do them?

Here we go restless can't stop now spinning careening wildly out of control faster now faster got to make that date gotta invent something new gotta go can't explain now gotta check my website over here over there where no it's not fun any more on to the next better newer happier yes this is it got it no it's not quite it wait there must be more...

I propose that looking inward as part of a cultural critique is a hallmark of socially engaged Buddhist analysis. One of my credos is that what happens out there is happening in the mind. My Buddhist practice can help me understand how social systems and mental structures reinforce each other.

During my years of meditation practice, I've been investigating restlessness. Of the five classical hindrances to meditation practice—sense desire, aversion, sleepiness, restlessness, and doubt—restlessness is my lot in this life. Early on it was like torture. If my mind was restless I could barely sit still. Eight years ago, on a long retreat, I had so much energy coursing through my body and so many thoughts cascading through my mind that at midnight I ran laps around the parking lot. It didn't help, so I moved into strenuous advanced yoga poses. Still restless, I took a walk in the woods by moonlight, only to terrify myself with what I took to be a cougar. (Are there actually cougars in Massachusetts?) I

ran inside, crying, but there was nowhere to hide.

When I told my meditation teacher of my horrible night, and how none of my antidotes to restlessness had calmed me down, he cocked his head, hid a smile, and asked nonchalantly, "Why didn't you try sitting with it?"

"Oh, wow," I said, "I never thought of that."

More recently I've learned that when I experience rapid thinking and jarring body sensations, there may be something going on underneath that I don't want to be present with. Usually, it's emotional pain. So when I see restlessness coming, I try to sink deeper, below the spinning mind to the unpleasantness underneath. Sometimes, the restlessness stops. Sometimes I fall into wells of sadness. Sometimes there's a story behind the restlessness, sometimes not. Sometimes my awareness grows spacious enough to be okay with hating the restlessness. Restlessness then becomes an arising just like everything else.

Barbara Hazard

What does this have to do with speed? I believe that American culture is stuck in the "hindrance" of restlessness. The careening speed—the rapid turnover of events, information, relationships, and goods—mirrors my own poor restless mind.

What's the deeper problem? I'll venture a few guesses. As a society, there's a lot we don't want to look at: ceaseless human suffering, a sense of meaninglessness, political disempowerment, polarization of the rich and poor, the loss of community, breakdown of social structures...do I need to go on? We have a lot to be sad about. Who wants to feel these things when it hurts so much? Better to rush and run and rent videos. The faster we go, the less we have to feel the pain, at the moment, anyway.

Could we possibly learn to sit with it?

They are now trying to cut the blank spaces out of TV. You know—the moment after the show stops and before the commercial begins, that less-than-a-second of dead space. Networks believe the lag time is too upsetting for viewers.

Is there anything wholesome in all this rushing? Could it be that humans are seeking connectedness, and that it is the urgency of this need that makes us hurry? Using new technologies that speed things up, we are trying to overcome boundaries of space and time. Behind the speed, there may be a longing to connect.

In my year in the monastery in Burma, not much really happened, at least on the outside. For a year I never got into a car or left the monastery's walls. I talked very occasionally, to just a few people. I only ate what was put on the plate in front of me. I never went to a restaurant. I spoke on the phone five times in one year. Not once did I watch TV, see a movie, dance, go to a party, have sex, hang out with friends, sing, eat after 12 noon, use hot water, or buy anything. I only wore one pair of shoes for the whole year, which, as my friends know, is a big deal for me.

When external activity is so stripped down, every little event becomes large in the mind. On retreat I discovered that anytime I did anything, there were results in my mind. When I ordained, it took my mind weeks to settle down from the thrill of it. Drop a pebble in a pond; small circles of ripples move outward and outward. When I nearly stepped on a toad I was nervous for three hours afterward. The tiniest action had an effect, like the time a butterfly landed for a second on my toe and I sat transfixed with awe for several minutes. In the silence, there was time for my mind to feel the repercussions of each event, to integrate it, and to settle with it.

I call this time reverberation time.

Last night I went on a sort-of date. When I got home my mind was so excited it couldn't stop spinning. So I crawled into the bath and let the reverberations happen as the hot water enveloped me. I let the rippling thinking run its course; I watched the chills and excitement and planning. Then after an hour or so, the thoughts mostly subsided. Then I went to bed.

We need this time. Events affect us all the time, of course, not just when we are on retreat. But the speed of our culture with the pace of our lives doesn't allow for reverberation time.

Everything affects us.

What happens when we don't give ourselves the silent space to sit, and feel, and move, and transform, and gestate, and integrate? What happens when we no longer have reverberation time? ❖

Diana Winston, Associate Director of BPF, continues to struggle with these issues. She welcomes dialogue.

Do You Have Enough Time To Read This ?

by Ken Jones

What follows is time—mine to write it, yours to read it. It is about liberation from time-as-suffering, and about dancing with time as a Buddhist practice. It is about the liberating of time—yours and other people's. And finally it is about liberation into time. Impermanence—nothing lasts—is one of the three characteristics of existence taught by the Buddha. Since my sixtieth birthday, each springtime has seemed more marvelous than the last. However, our modern culture gives us a lot of help avoiding this sense of mortality. And time-suffering seems to have shifted now to the 24-hour clock.

In our overdeveloped world, for those who have jobs there seems to be less and less time. People must work more and more hours to earn the money needed to enjoy the ever-widening range of goods and services that supposedly make their diminished leisure time more enjoyable. This is the consumerism of time. Being in a hurry is a mark of success. And it makes the permanently unemployed (who have to kill time) feel inadequate.

We have more information but less time, and hence less reflective knowledge, and certainly less wisdom.

Of course, an inner speediness has always been a means of avoiding the inner void; this is one of the first discoveries we make on the meditation cushion. As Lewis Carroll's White Rabbit (from *Alice in Wonderland*), clock in hand, observed: "It takes all the running you can do to keep in the same place." Our speedy contemporary culture is a technological and social expression of that inner speediness, as well as a response to external problems. And our speedy culture, in turn, gives speedy ego a frenetic boost. We want it now, with minimum inconvenience, and are increasingly acculturated to expect it now. For example, we now need information technology to control the organizational and industrial complexity created by our mass acquisitiveness. But also, because it's there, now, at the touch of a keyboard, we can't resist the buzz of instant convenience: the telephone answering machine, then the fax, then the modem. We have more information but less time, and hence less reflective knowledge, and certainly less wisdom.

Pity the engaged Buddhist, trapped in this cage of time 'n' tasks! How do I find the time to meditate (another task)? And do my bit for people and planet? Not to mention earning a living, bringing up children, being a companion to my partner, nurturing my friendships, doing my own creative things—*and* finding time to be genuinely idle!

It's not surprising that there are workshops and manuals on time management. They teach many useful techniques, but no external fix will get to the heart of the matter. "Pursue the light and you will lose the source," as the old Zen poem has it. Inner work on time is valuable not only in order to step out of time-hassle. It is also a gateway to wider insight. The tighter the shoe pinches, the more potentially valuable is that point for awareness practice. And time-hassle is top-grade meditation manure to sit with. Several peculiarities of time come to light.

We make time into a thing, which is somehow separate from "me." Consider the curious phraseology of time, like "I can spare you some of my time." This objectifying of time is yet another of what William Blake called our "mind-forged manacles." We may not have enough time to do some things we want to do and may have to spend too much time doing what we dislike. We may struggle quite hard to "make more time." In meditation, we may become aware that time is shaped by self-need, and doesn't exist "out there" in the way we thought it did. Time and being are one "time-being." The blooming and the withering of flowers is the passing of time. Moreover, there is no time other than now; the past and the future are only ideas. Sometimes "time stands still," in that we have momentarily ceased grasping after the upcoming future and lost touch with a self-confirming past. This is the absolute sense of time; but we must return to the relative in time to catch our train. Thus we discover "time-being" in two dimensions: it passes from past through present to future, and yet there is always only the present in this passage-less passage of time. Time is real, but it is timeless. This is only a paradox when seen from the point of view of time passing, and is nicely expressed in an ancient Zen poem:

In the deep mountain

no calendar
even when the coldest season passes

no awareness of a new year

(Continued on page 27)

EARTH TREASURE VASES

A Bridge Across Time

by Cynthia Jurs

We live at a time when our planet is besieged with problems, disease, warfare, and pollution. What will it take to heal our Earth and restore balance once again? For humans to wake up and take care of each other and our planet? I would like to tell you a story for our times, poised as we are on the threshold of a new millennium. This is a true story of an old wise man from another world, another time, with a message for us, today.

Once upon a time (only a decade ago), I made a pilgrimage to meet a wise, holy man who lived in a cave high in the mountains of Nepal. Charok Rinpoche was 106 years old and had never left his Himalayan retreat to venture out into the world. He was almost blind, had a long white beard, and moved his crippled body outside only with the help of his 50-year-old daughter and 5-year-old grandson. His life had been dedicated to the practice of meditation, his mind and heart sharpened by living amidst the elements of the earth and sky. He didn't miss a beat in spite of his advanced years; his perceptions were quick and finely tuned.

I trekked up the trail for days on end preparing myself to meet this old lama, who was the teacher of a sherpa friend who had grown up in Nepal under his care. I contemplated this remarkable opportunity to receive guidance from a man who had only known the protected valleys and mountaintops of Nepal but had traveled vast realms through the power of his compassionate awareness and expanded consciousness. What would his perspective be and what could I learn from him that I could share with others to help make this Earth a better place for all?

I lived with Charok Rinpoche for several weeks, walking among the lichen-draped pines and well-worn paths. Around the area were caves where practitioners had stayed in the past and rocky outcroppings where they had pursued their dharma with dedication and devotion. Charok Rinpoche's cave had a painted door, a few windows, and two rooms. One room was the kitchen and living/sleeping room and the other was the *gompa*, a small temple painted with the peaceful and wrathful deities of the bardos, reminding us of the journey that awaits us at the time of death. There was a small terrace outside on the "roof" where he would receive visitors in the sun, and where, one day, we spoke.

I told him about what was happening to our world, how the Earth was in peril, and asked him for his advice. I remember vividly that he questioned me if there was anyone where I came from who had dedicated their lives to practicing deeply—because, he said, "Even just one person who is making a sincere effort in the dharma will bring benefit to the whole area around where they live."

Then he told me about the tradition of the Earth Treasure Vases. This is an ancient practice to bring protection and healing to the earth by filling earthen vessels with prayers and offerings and burying them in the ground. My rational mind rebelled. My impatience was triggered by its desire for instant solutions. How could such a thing really work? But I could not reject his response to my deepest question—perhaps this was an answer worth pursuing. So, following his advice, I set out with my sherpa friend and our traveling companions a few days later for a nearby monastery to ask the abbot there for his help in making 25 Earth Treasure Vases.

Charok Rinpoche

Charok Rinpoche died the following year, but I felt blessed to have encountered such a sage and received his simple recipe for the Earth: fill the vases with offerings and prayers, seal them with our best intentions, and bury them in the Earth to bring protection and healing to the whole area. "Just put them in the ground; they'll do the work," he said.

It is said that the Earth Treasure Vases originated in the eighth century when Guru Padmasambhava, the great master who brought Buddhism to Tibet, prophesied times of terrible degradation to the

Earth, when warfare, disease, and pollution would overwhelm the natural balance. The Earth Treasure Vase was to restore that lost balance during these times. It was foreseen that the very essence of the elements of life—air, water, fire, earth, and space—would be threatened and have become so depleted that they would have lost their vitality due to our obsessive consuming and materialistic fixation. The five poisons of ignorance, anger, pride, desire, and jealousy would gain such a hold on our collective consciousness that we would completely forget our innate nature and basic goodness. But the vases were said to have the power to restore that lost vitality to the elements and bring long life, magnetize abundance, reduce warfare and aggression, enhance peace and prosperity, even serve to reconnect us to our wisdom—the awareness that we are each part of an interdependent whole.

Burying a vase in the Headwaters Forest

Wendy Johnson

It took time to understand how to work with the vases, and how to claim this ancient tradition as our own. The magnitude of the world's problems was overwhelming, but finally the Earth herself spoke with the voice of forest fires raging and serious drought taking hold in northern New Mexico, our own backyard. We wanted to do something, and finally began to work with the Earth Treasure Vases. Over the spring and summer months that year, people from our Open Way Sangha in Santa Fe brought an astounding variety of offerings to fill the vases, and prayed, meditated, laughed, and cried. By fall, the first four vases were ready to go, one for each of the four directions of the Rio Grande bioregion. The fuller the vases got, the more alive they felt, containing all of our hopes, dreams, and prayers. It was clear to us they had a purpose, and to fulfill their job they were sealed and buried in the earth, out of our hands. The process of filling them with offerings and prayers, holding them with great care, allowing them to guide us to the place where they could do the most good, and stewarding them to their place of rest, opened us up to unforeseen things. We were participating with the unknown, entering another kind of time, and nurturing a relationship with each other and the Earth. The healing had begun.

What has emerged is a kind of Earth mandala, beginning with the four directions of our bioregion where the vases were buried first, and radiating out in all directions. The vases' sphere of influence has slowly expanded as more vases have gone out. Each time a vase goes to a new place, there is another story of what is needed, and how we can engage our practice to benefit these places, people, and all beings.

One vase went to southern Mexico, to the state of Oaxaca, where two major hurricanes had devastated the coastal region. Starting in Oaxaca City, we met with a group of environmentalists and *curanderos* who enthusiastically took the vase into their circle and filled it over three month's time. It then traveled to the ocean to be sealed and buried at a sacred area on a rocky point of coastline that is protected by the local people. We clambered down near the water's edge and prayed to be guided to a spot where we could bury the vase. A pelican flew past, a wave splashed our faces and suddenly, straight ahead, a whale breached right in front of where we sat, so close it took our breath away! After that, we knew where the spot would be found. We recalled an area with old saguaros and shrubs growing in the dirt not too far back—the only place we had seen amidst all that rock that we might be able to dig. Sure enough, the path became clear, a perfect spot shone in the underbrush. Still thinking the ground was like rock, we were prepared to dig with all our strength, but it was as soft as could be. The Earth opened up easily as we dug a hole and gently placed the vase in the ground.

Another vase journeyed to the Headwaters Forest in Northern California where the Giant Redwood trees, among the last of their kind still to stand, are being killed for lumber. The trees are protected now in the heart of that old forest by a simple vessel filled with the passionate prayers and heartfelt offerings of hundreds of people who held the vase and passed it warm hand to warm hand until it was full. Radical environmentalists with little interest in ritual or prayer were unsure about the vase at first, then found themselves joining wholeheartedly to plan a ritual, make offerings, seal the vase and carry it into the forest to bury it deep inside the redwood duff. Buddhist practice joined directly with environmental activism and all who were involved were deeply affected. Shortly after the vase was buried, the State of California purchased 10,000 acres of land, including a portion of the Headwaters Grove, protecting it from further logging. [See *TW* Winter 1998].

A group of us gathered recently at Green Gulch Zen Center to meditate and place offerings in four more vases, each one dedicated that night to going in a different direction. One will travel to Hiroshima, Japan, to be

buried near a tree that survived the atomic bomb and is known as the Phoenix Tree. One vase will go to the Balkans, to the Women in Black Conference, as an emissary of our concern for all that has happened there, bridging ethnic and cultural boundaries. One vase is traveling to the World Atomic Safety Holiday meeting in Berlin. And one vase has been dedicated to make a pilgrimage around the Bay Area of Northern California, the first vase to find its home in an urban environment (see next page for story). Vases are also going out to India (near the source of the Ganges), Chernobyl, Ecuador, Hawaii, Cambodia, Australia, to name a few places.

We have learned that the vases themselves inspire people to steward them to a place that they feel connected to. Through a process of deep listening and meditating on the world's suffering, we become clear where they should go. We try to get out of our own way and not figure it out, but allow for something larger than ourselves to emerge. Guidelines have been developed by the Open Way Sangha where the vases are kept until they are ready to make their particular journey.

The vases have been teaching us to surrender to a larger, more expanded sense of time and to look for changes with less preconceptions. They have catalyzed us to see our work as that of restoring balance in nature and among ourselves. The millennium ending has focused on material advancement, scientific and technological development, at the expense of the delicate balance in the natural world. In our times, science has taken over the rational mind and humans have forgotten how to commune with the elements; it seems as though the mystery of life is all but figured out and our materialistic activity is truly destroying the planet. As we enter the next millennium, we have an opportunity to integrate all that has been learned from the past and come to terms with science and the sacred, spirit and matter, masculine and feminine, light and dark, and arrive at a true balance—the middle way.

Can it be that this simple practice of the Earth Treasure Vases has unwittingly helped to reconnect us to the basic life force of the planet? I know my own awareness, appreciation, and respect for life has certainly increased. And everyone who has participated in this process is surprisingly moved and personally touched by the experience. The vases seem to boost our collective bodhicitta, providing the opportunity to focus, unify, and magnify our best intentions. When we bury them in the ground, we participate in earth healing. Magic happens—we have witnessed it. The rains come, the whale breaches, the trees bloom. And our happiness increases.

Is there a "happily ever after" ending to this story? We need to do much to restore balance and heal our situation, wherever we are. And it will take lifetimes, generations to accomplish. But what else is there to do? This is the time we are alive and we must dedicate ourselves to ending the suffering one region at a time, step by step. Who knows what will happen next? Certainly not me. I am just a child of our culture, trying to see my way out of the maze of samsara, who happened to meet an elfin sage in the high mountains of Nepal and caught a glimpse of another world, another time, through his eyes. A world within our world, a time beyond time, here and now. ❖

Cynthia Jurs lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico and is a dharmacharya in the Order of Interbeing of Thich Nhat Hanh and also a student of Tibetan Buddhism. She is the co-director of Animal Alliance, an organization dedicated to protecting endangered species and reducing animal suffering. For information, contact Cynthia at Open Way Sangha, Route 4, Box 60B, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501 <allanimals@igc.apc.org>.

What Can We Do in our Own Backyard?

by M. Paloma Pavel

"Some white folks rush to Buddhism to escape the pain of their own story with this land. Slavery, genocide—it's just too much." So says Carl Anthony, founder of Urban Habitat, activist architect, and "visionary of exuberant cities." I observe that in a similar way, many spirited women who have found patriarchy untenable rush to Buddhism, uncritical of disempowering languages and practices. We are walking together in Cesar Chavez Park, at the Berkeley Marina: wind and waves, brilliant Sunday morning light, chipmunks darting among the ragged rocky outcroppings of the promontory. The salt air stings with Carl's words.

Carl points to Emeryville and its trade-friendly mall, beyond the growing strangle of traffic arteries. "Most people don't know that there is an Ohlone burial ground just over there." Due west is Mt. Tamalpais, sacred mountain to many, and Marin County with its rapid white gentrification. To the north are the Point Richmond refineries and the ongoing battles for truth-telling to Chevron's workers and predominantly black neighbors. We drop into silence, holding this vast panorama of the sacred and devastated, the community acts of privilege and resistance.

That evening, Mayumi Oda and Wendy Johnson invite us to join a circle at Green Gulch Farm in Marin County to bless the Earth Treasure Vases. We learn that vases will be going to Hiroshima, Kosovo, and Chernobyl; the location of the fourth is yet to be decided. We drive beside the mountain we saw at a distance that morning, and follow the foggy ribbon of highway out to the coast. About 30 people sit in silence at dusk in the yurt.

Seeing the vase for the first time, I search for a word to describe its feeling, its shape. "Vase" suggests an ornate urn, in the English tradition. But, "it's...a clay pot!" I declare—ordinary, squat, useful. Such pots are made all over the world—in Chiapas, Chimayo, Appalachia—usually by women, from their land, from what is given. Such a pot sits on the ground, holds beans, seeds, food...not fancy enough for tourists. Perched on Cynthia's lap as she tells its birth and travel story, this one calls to me. Like a friendly being, reddish brown, warm, responsive to heat, its porous glaze is burnished by the oil of human touch.

As the vases go round the circle clockwise, we welcome each one and place offerings in its open mouth: prayers, bark, seeds, herbal medicines, crystals. Rotating it in my hands, a vision arises. What would it mean to carry this on pilgrimage, not only to Hiroshima, but to Hunter's Point, a predominantly African American neighborhood in San Francisco? To recognize its connection to holy centers in Tibet and also to local sacred sites: creeks hidden by asphalt, gardens on former dirt lots tended by ex-prisoners and kids. What would it mean to bring a vase to military base conversion sites, the Presidio, the 'hood, La Mission...earth heart breaking open. Based on the group's response to this vision, Earth House (a feminist center for environmental justice in Oakland) was designated as the guardian of an urban vision for the fourth vase.

May we take refuge in this place—our own backyard. May we take refuge in our many cultures. May we see our own home as a sacred pilgrimage destination. What can we do in our own backyard? ❖

M. Paloma Pavel is an ecopsychologist and social activist, and the founder of Earth House.

Vision Meeting At Earth House, Oakland, CA
Sunday, January 30, 4 PM

What are your prayers and visions for an Earth Treasure Vase in the Bay Area? What does it ask of us? Join us for meditation and a community visioning meeting on the possibilities for the Earth Treasure Vase. Call 510/652-2425 to reserve a space and for directions.

Time to read this? continued

Understanding all this helps, but only the living experience of it liberates from time we who are time. There is only the unadorned suchness of time, which we can calibrate for our (and others') convenience, so we get to the meeting promptly at 10 AM. With practice and experience, we move freely in our newfound sense of "time-being," liberated back into time which is just how it is. There is still only an hour to prepare the material for that meeting. Nothing has changed; everything has changed—or at least we can now sense the possibility. An hour is still not long enough to do the job as well as we and others would like. So be it. But freed of pressurized anxiety we shall probably make a better job of it than we would once have done.

The liberating practice of awareness can be sharpened by experimenting with our daily and weekly ingrained and time-bound habits and attitudes. What does it feel like when we disconcert ourselves by abandoning familiar routines? Nothing too serious, of course. But what does a whole day of willful, premeditated, time-wasting idleness feel like, with so much left undone? A whole day to contemplate guilt! Do the heavens fall? Or do new possibilities emerge? Such playfulness can bring forth insight and self-compassion, may sometimes reveal new personal directions, and is certainly good for a laugh. ❖

Ken Jones lives in Cwmrheidol, Wales and is a founder and current secretary of the Network of Engaged Buddhists (UK). He has just completed his third book on engaged Buddhism, provisionally titled Liberation is Indivisible: the Convergence of Buddhism and Modernity.

[You can find this article on the "Think Sangha" web page at: <www.bpf.org/think.html>]

FACING THE MILLENNIAL DAZE

by Taigen Dan Leighton

As we approach the magical turning over of the 9s to the zeros, the midnight chime when 1999 becomes 2000, our world seems to be immersed in crisis, with ethnic cleansing in the Balkans and political cleansing in East Timor. The very use of such antiseptic euphemisms for mass murder matches the new, safe, antiseptic warfare whereby our government can drop "smart" bombs on civilians as a matter of policy and call it collateral damage, as long as we do not risk any casualties to "our own people." The staggering gap in resources between the extremely wealthy and the poor increases in our society and in the world, with global corporations, unchecked and unaccountable, strengthening their stranglehold on our corrupt political and media apparatus. The growth in the building of prisons rivals that of the computer industry, with vengeance increasingly taking priority over education. Meanwhile, environmental devastation proceeds at an alarming pace. And the planet itself resounds with earthquakes, hurricanes, floods, and other strange climactic phenomena, as if to echo the catastrophes said to announce the end of Chinese dynasties, or the destructive cataclysms foretold in Biblical apocalyptic prophesies.

Enduring messianic yearnings for Maitreya are scrawled graffiti-like on Himalayan rocks, still visible, pleading, "Come, Maitreya, come."

While all this transpires in the world at large, it seems to me, anecdotally, that a good many folks I know are having a hard time personally. The social and environmental crises are taking a personal toll, manifesting as depression, anxiety, and frustration, and not only for those who make it into the papers by using readily available assault weapons to murderously dramatize their own mental distress. Many of us feel an unusual sense of dread.

Perhaps these are Cassandra-like rantings: there has always been ample misery in the world, as Buddha's first noble truth proclaims. Or, perhaps, the powerful technologies at hand do mean that a Great Death more dangerous than ever before is possible in the world nowadays. But what does this have to do with the year 2000? Probably not much, at least directly. This number 2000 is arbitrary, and corresponds to no natural or astronomical cycle or phenomena. Modern scholars believe that Jesus was actually born sometime between 6 and 4 B.C.E. The Hebrew calendar calls the current year 5760; Buddhist calendars vary a bit, one designating this the year 2542 (counting from the year of Buddha's birth); the Chinese calendar reads 4697. But as the hegemony of the scientific consumerist West has grown, most of the globe is plugged into 1999. Most of the world slouches to the year 2000.

Many of us have succumbed, to some extent, to the millennial daze. It is hard to face the grimmer realities, and to dispel superstitions, or our own fears. Whether or not the number 2000 might actually cause our difficulties, people are nervous. When many believe that a new age is arriving, such thinking makes it so. All the lists of the hundred best whatevers of the century herald the end of something, and a new turning point. Meditation may teach us that in actuality each inhale, each exhale, is ever an end, and a beginning. Moment to moment our world is always transforming in the dynamic evernow. But even so, this 2000 business is disconcerting. We don't know what is happening. What about the most recent schoolyard atrocity or genocidal horror; what about that last earthquake?

Traditional Buddhist views of history tend to be negative, seeing phases of degeneration of the true Dharma as we get further from the Buddha's time. But there is also the ideal perspective of the Buddhist sangha as a positive historical agent that has been for twenty-five centuries (of course at best sporadically) gradually leading all sentient beings toward awakening insight and compassion. The project of the Buddha's order of practitioners is to civilize society, by demonstrating an alternative to the usual worldly priorities of success and gain. The sangha and its work somehow still survives today. It takes on varying forms in new situations, for example in the mission of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship. A vital part of this long-range purpose may be simply to acknowledge that it will probably take a number more millennia of steady practice to reach total fruition of Buddhism's socially constructive potential.

Returning to 1999, a time perceived as pivotal can be an opportunity for massive renewal, as well as a source of anxiety. How do we meet the challenge, turn troubles into nourishment, new insight, and increased maturity? Based on the Old Testament practice of Jubilee, of erasing social inequality by forgiving debts every seven years and allowing land to revert to its original owners every forty-nine years, there is a movement for the year 2000 to be a Jubilee year. A range of religious, human rights, and social justice organizations have cooperated to propose that all nations that have been forced into massive indebtedness through the mechanisms of economic globalization would have their debts forgiven, and could make a fresh beginning.

What can Buddhist teachings offer us in the way of spiritual support and practices for facing and transforming tough times? What does Buddhism have to say about epochal transitions, or the onset of great new ages? The figure of Maitreya Bodhisattva was predicted by Shakyamuni, the historical Buddha, to be the next future Buddha, or perfected Awakened One. So Maitreya has long been an Asian emblem for the possibility of a future enlightened age, a better time dawning. The teachings vary as to when Maitreya will actually appear, with scriptural estimates ranging from around the year 4500 C.E., to more than five and a half billion years after Shakyamuni Buddha. And yet, over the past fifteen hundred years, various Chinese rulers and rebels alike have proclaimed themselves to be incarnations of Maitreya, or of avatars preparing the way for this new World-Honored One. Enduring messianic yearnings for Maitreya are scrawled graffiti-like on Himalayan rocks, still visible, pleading, "Come, Maitreya, come." And today as well, there are persons among us who claim to be Maitreya manifested. It may be so; we don't yet know.

This not knowing is one of the great beneficial practices modeled and encouraged by the Maitreya archetype. Sitting up in his meditation heaven, Maitreya Bodhisattva gazes into the unknown future knowing only that he is destined for Buddhahood, and that eventually he will bring into being an awakened buddha land. Envisioning such a future necessarily involves recognizing the unfulfilled aspect of this present. Maitreya looks to the future and holds in his heart not only the next seven generations, but beings of future millennia, even though he does not know their names and faces. Simple willingness to include in our awareness both the near and distant future is one of Maitreya's practices in which we can all personally participate.

Maitreya looks to the future and holds in his heart beings of future millennia, even though he does not know their names and faces.

Perhaps Maitreya's primary practice, as he faces the unknown future, is patience, which might also be called tolerance or forbearance. The best known images of Maitreya Bodhisattva (among the best known Buddhist images in the world) are the delicate Korean and Japanese statues of Maitreya, fingers to his chin, pondering how to save all sentient beings. Maitreya sits and waits. At times of crisis, often the most helpful—and difficult—thing to do is to just sit and wait. This practice of patience is not passivity, but active observation of the phenomena facing us, and readiness to respond and act when an opportunity for helpfulness appears. When we don't know how to solve the problems in our life, our forbearance and ongoing attention can provide us the time and calm to see what is possible and helpful. Maitreya is associated with the Yogacara branch of Buddhism, and with its meditative study of the phenomenology of consciousness. In difficult situations, when it seems that there is nothing to be done, we can actively engage our interest and clearly observe whatever appears before us. The Yogacara psychological system describes eight levels of consciousness, and presents an elaborate model for understanding the mental workings of karma. A detailed discussion of this system is beyond the scope of this essay, but meditative self-study is certainly a useful practice for facing difficult times. Such yogic study of awareness and its interaction with the world supports our patience, and may also reveal new perspectives and possibilities for responding to the problems we face.

Maitreya is named for the practice of loving-kindness. Maitreyan figures such as the Chinese fat laughing Buddha Hotei (his Japanese name) are known for their divine foolishness. Ubiquitous in Chinese restaurants and temples, Hotei is based on an historical Ch'an monk of the tenth century who wandered the streets and played with children. Before "disappearing into the sky," Hotei lamented that the world does not yet appreciate Maitreya. He then came to be considered an incarnation of Maitreya, to the degree that Chinese images of him are now simply labeled Maitreya (Milofe in Chinese). Many other historical Buddhist figures associated with Maitreya demonstrated loving heart and exemplary kindness, along with some foolishness in worldly terms.

Perhaps the most crucial practice for facing difficulties is this attitude of unaffected loving-kindness. Maitreya's goodwill is embodied in the simple wish, "May all beings be happy." The best way to greet the new millennium may be to uphold the Buddhist wish for universal awakening. To leave out anyone, Albanian or Serb, female or male, African or Asian, poor or wealthy, young or old, would violate the inclusivity of Maitreya's intention that all beings together find the true happiness of universal awakening. If he is excluding anybody, Maitreya cannot yet be Buddha. If we label any person or group as subhuman, inherently evil, or the source of our problems, this will divert us from the path toward Buddha's awakening, and may cause personal cruelty, genocide, or a variety of other horrors.

The Buddhist teacher Joanna Macy, a Maitreya-like champion of future generations, has pointed out that difficult situations actually give us an extraordinary opportunity to make a significant difference in the world if we sustain clear attention and act fearlessly. As we face this transition, the intention, "May all beings be happy," can change the course of events. The fundamental Buddhist practice of uprightness and courage remains the best posture in any age. ❖

Taigen Leighton is a Soto Zen priest, and the author of Bodhisattva Archetypes: Classic Buddhist Guides to Awakening and their Modern Expression.

Philip Sugden is an artist living in Ohio. His new book of drawings, Visions from the Fields of Merit, *is available from Floating Temple Press, P.O. Box 572, Findlay, OH 45839. Tel: 419/422-0498.*

STAYING STEADFAST

Reflections on Geronimo's Release

by Jarvis Jay Masters

Editor's Note: Geronimo ji Jaga Pratt was a decorated Vietnam war veteran who returned to Los Angeles after the war, joined the Black Panther Party while a student at UCLA, and was framed by the FBI's counter-intelligence program against the Panthers. He served 27 years in prison (the same number of years as Nelson Mandela) for a murder he did not commit. He was finally freed in 1998, after Amnesty International and many dedicated legal workers and citizens campaigned for his freedom. In prison, he devoted himself to mentoring younger prisoners, and showing them ways to hold onto their dignity and humanity. Since his release, he has dedicated himself to prisoners' rights, including the cause of Mumia Abu-Jamal.

It was the time of day when I always lean against the bars and watch the window on the wall opposite my cell. This view into the sunset is the greatest joy I have known here. I can see green hills, a curved road, and, tucked away, the small community where prison officials and their families live normal lives beyond the prison gates.

Over the years I've spent happy hours watching the kids outside playing, riding their bikes in their driveways, and wrestling on their front lawns. Now, those same kids drive up in nice cars or on motorbikes. They are all grown, young adults now, perhaps in college, but still shadowed by San Quentin's old face towering over their parents' front and back yards.

After more than 15 years, I could still hear the sound of the free wind blowing across my ears.

"We were all younger then," I sometimes think, straining as hard as ever to see them, just as I did when they were tiny toddlers.

"Man, check out Channel Four," I heard someone shout over the tier. I looked at my watch—time for the evening news. As I went to the back of my cell to turn on my TV, I heard Hawk's voice ring out from his cell like a loud intercom over the whole tier: "Man, man! They're letting Geronimo Pratt out of prison!" I hurriedly flipped through the channels, looking for Channel Four.

There had been so many news reports about Geronimo's case over the years, and I had followed them intensely. It was Geronimo who always told me, "Keep the faith, Youngin," whenever he and I had seen each other, years ago, in the mid-'80s. Then, I was facing my death penalty trial, and he was, to me, an already older-than-old con, working as a trustee in the visiting area at San Quentin. Some of my own legal representatives also worked tirelessly on Geronimo's case for years. I felt a close connection to all of their struggles to free Geronimo someday.

Now, as the screen of my television gave me the first glimpse of Geronimo after so many years gone by, it was as if he hadn't aged a bit—there he was, still with his shining bald head and the old-man specs he always wore. Back in my early twenties I used to hustle him for his things, and I had asked him to give those specs to me. "Ahh, nah, Youngin'," he'd said, grinning. "Youngin', you see too well...get my age, then getcha some."

I probably really needed his specs now. I smiled to myself, as I squatted down with my back pressed to the side wall of my cell, overwhelmed with happiness to see Geronimo on television, a free man.

This was the kind of freedom that I sometimes dreamed of for myself. To see the smile on Geronimo's face and the elation on the faces of his family and supporters all around him just sent my heart racing. My breath kept pace with each step he took, with each glance he sought of his widening world. I wanted to see his feet. To see the grass beneath him. To finally know, through Geronimo, what this felt like. After more than 15 years, I realized that I could still remember the feel of grass and hear the sound of the free wind blowing across my ears.

With all my heart, I felt the joy of Geronimo's children as they looked at him. They had never seen their father beyond the gates of prison, had never heard their dad's voice outside the prison fence. The wrongful conviction of Geronimo had, for his children's whole lives, left them with an emptiness, and their young lives had been spent in the struggle to free him. It was as if they too had been wrongly imprisoned. My eyes swelled with tears.

As Geronimo tried to find the words to speak into the cluster of reporters' microphones, I thought of how different this day might have been if there had been capital punishment when he was convicted of first degree murder. How black this day could have been if the Supreme Court hadn't temporarily abolished it. Instead, these reporters could have been describing the last days, minutes, and seconds of Geronimo's life as he was strapped down in the death chamber.

This daunting thought eclipsed my senses, and I didn't hear a single word of Geronimo's statements to the media.

I watched as Geronimo was escorted through the crowds to a waiting car. Seated inside, he reached for his seatbelt, and, not knowing how to connect it, he almost tied the upper strap around his neck like a kind of hang-

(Continued on next page)

THE GREAT VEHICLE

by Margie Erhart

I am the *tenken* for our little zendo, playing the *mokugyo* instead of the *han** we don't yet have, to signal that zazen is about to begin. I love my job. Sometimes I think I love it too much. I get to stand outside in all weather, making wonderful hollow noises which echo through the neighborhood—I play loudly!

In the winter I am playing in the dark, morning and night. Though both darks look the same, there is such a difference. The morning has hopes and feelings and first birds that the evening doesn't have; and the evening has a stillness, like the end of a sigh, that the morning doesn't have. And of course the stars are different. The constellations, the planets, have moved, risen or set. In spring and summer I don't see the stars. I am playing in all that light which has clearer gradations than the darkness, or maybe just clearer to me because I am more used to watching the light change than the darkness change. I'm asleep during much of the darkness.

The one thing that does not change, season to season, is the bus. It comes by the zendo at seven minutes before seven in the evening, three minutes after I have begun the han. I never remember it's going to come, so it surprises me every Monday evening, which is our big night of zazen. At ten of seven I'm in my position near the back door. Sometimes I do a wandering han, which is the advantage of using the mokugyo for the han's job. I do a tock! or two on the back deck, looking out at the wetland and the rooftops of North Truro, or the stars in the winter. And then I hear it. I have to admit, it makes my heart race. It's so exciting. Everything is still and then there's a roar. In the winter the sign that says PROVINCETOWN on the front of the bus is lit up, and inside the bus some people have their reading lights on. In the winter it's the best. It comes like a comet out of all that stillness and blackness. It comes so quickly—it seems to actually speed up going around the corner—and is gone so quickly, taking its dazzle and roar with it.

I am amazed by the speed at which I run toward emotion. The bus has a feeling of purity to it that I am surprised by and drawn to every week. It is sudden and practically miraculous in its appearance, and my heart leaps toward it; my whole being does. I feel it the way I felt the drum at Tassajara Zen Mountain Monastery, all through my bones, as if I had swallowed or inhaled it and it was beating inside me like my own heart. The bus roars in, it roars out. I haven't even taken one full breath in the time it exists for me that week. And yet I'm completely changed by it. And then I'm changed back again. The emotion called excitement is so powerful, so compelling. It visits me. It comes on the bus! It lives inside me for an inbreath. For one inbreath, I am excitement.

> *The one thing that does not change, season to season, is the bus... It comes like a comet out of all that stillness and blackness.*

When I first practiced Zen, I understood it to be a very sober practice, with little or no room for the emotions. That misunderstanding led me to get up off my cushion and not come back for 17 years. I was not, in fact, ready for the passionate practice Zen really is. But now my readiness surprises me. I have strong feelings which seek expression at every turn. Playing the han—the mokugyo—is a wonderful expression of my own emotion in the voice of something larger. When I hold the mokugyo, I hold it firmly with my right hand, right in front of my heart. Its shape is like an enlarged heart, and when I hold it there it seems the right place for it. When I hit it I hold it high up in the air. I try to keep everything loose and moving and wholehearted. Without effort or resistance, the mokugyo is striking itself. ❖

* The *mokuygyo* is a Japanese wooden bell. The *han* is a hanging wooden board that is struck with a mallet.

Margie Erhart is a writer living in Wellfleet, Massachusetts. Her most recent novel is Old Love *(Steerforth Press, 1996).*
This piece was first printed in Sound of Water #14, *the newsletter of The Pond Village Zendo.*

Staying Steadfast, continued

man's noose, instead of pulling it across his chest. Instantly, my pores opened with embarrassment. This would be me, too, if I got out, because things have changed so much in the years I've been inside. I didn't know whether to laugh or cry for my ol' buddy Geronimo not knowing how to use a simple device like a seatbelt. Jolts of embarrassment for him chased right up into my chest. I wanted the car to hurry up and drive away into that sunset of freedom.

And when it did so, with Geronimo inside, I felt faith renewed inside me. Not faith dependent on an outcome such as I had witnessed on television, I realized. But a faith in my own deep innocence, and in my spiritual practice. A faith that I can keep on going and not lose sight of hope, as Geronimo never ever did. Whether I live or die on death row, as Geronimo once said to me, "There is never a darkness that is not light enough to stay steadfast to your faith, Youngin'." ❖

Jarvis Jay Masters lives on San Quentin's death row. He is a Tibetan Buddhist practitioner and a frequent contributor to Turning Wheel. *His book* Finding Freedom: Writings from Death Row *(Padma Publishing) is available in bookstores and from the BPF office for $12. Jarvis can be contacted at: P.O. Box C-35169, San Quentin, CA 94974.*

Seagull Sutra

Susan Moon

NO TRACE

This is my hermitage:
work to forget self,
a simple house,
stretch of wild ocean
at the door.

All these changing clouds.
Bodhisattvas pass by
without looking;
artisans, the learned
and famous, maybe—
who knows?

I am blending in
like smoke. Soon
there will be no trace.

—Sam Harrison

Sam Harrison lives in Ormond by the Sea, Florida. He is a hospice nurse, poet, novelist, and longtime Zen practitioner.

THE TIME OF YOUR LIFE

by J.C. Amberchele

Before I came to prison, I saw time as linear, racing or dragging but nevertheless advancing reliably into a future of personal advantage. But prison changed that. To be sent to prison is to be cut off, removed, sealed in a void. Gone were family and friends, gone the comfortable routine of my job, gone also the weekends in the mountains, gone even my clothes, my hair, my watch. To be in prison is to go nowhere, not in the sense of treading water but of drowning repeatedly, and in this it is relentless: the boredom, the fear, the violence are constant reminders. But above all, to come to prison is to stop abruptly: to a new prisoner the world literally quits, and what remains seems endlessly empty, without dimension.

When I first arrived, I experienced the most profound sense of absence, a feeling I never could have imagined before. This same knowledge of timelessness, I have heard, is experienced by people who choose suicide: a past too painful to remember, a future that appears hopeless at best, and the unbearable present of life in prison.

I had missed my father's funeral without even knowing he had died.

But slowly, perhaps to prevent myself from going insane, I built a life inside these walls. I found a job, friends, time to write. For many prisoners it is easier to pick up where they left off, reestablishing the habits that brought them here in the first place. The tiers are crowded with con men and thieves, gangsters and thugs. But for some, the shock of prison is so great that it propels them in a new direction.

Not long after I arrived I met a man doing "life" on a major drug charge. Despite the time he was facing, he filled his days with good cheer and positive effort. This man—with twenty years to parole eligibility—was a fervent member of AA, of academic and church groups. Although he earned no more than $1.50 a day at his job, he was perhaps more dedicated than the entire hierarchy of staff supervisors above him. One day I asked him why he was so enthusiastic. "Why not?" he replied.

And I believe this is when I began to view time differently. "Why not?" became for me—not suddenly but with the sort of shift in thinking that requires months or years—a source of inner strength, a catchword for personal motivation. "Why not?" became "Sure—why not?"

Not long ago my son and daughter came to visit me. My daughter had done some research on our family tree and brought news that her grandfather, my father, whom I had not seen nor spoken to in nearly 20 years, had died of a heart attack the year following my arrest. Hardly remembering him herself, having met him only once when she was young, she patted my arm and waited for my reaction. When none came, she took my hand and continued talking about her new job and new apartment, eventually passing the conversation over to my son, who had much to say about his high school football team.

For the rest of the visit I listened, laughed at their stories, and felt their excitement and hope for the future, but it was not easy. I kept thinking about my dad, and about time, doing time, and what it has meant for me. I had missed more than a decade of my children's lives, nearly their entire teenage years, and would miss countless more. I had missed my father's funeral without even knowing he had died, and worse, I had missed the opportunity to tell him at least once that I loved him.

But I was also thinking that, if nothing else, prison, with its rigid conformity and structured regularity, has taught me that time is cyclical, not linear. I see time now as a great spiral, corkscrewing out of the past and carrying with it all the complex moments of history, and always coming around, coming around. The world, I have realized, allows for second chances, but only if you create them. And it is not enough to make room for new habits among the old ones; second chances are created from within, in a process that either begins with a change of attitude or begins not at all, a process that requires altering a lifetime of familiar but self-defeating beliefs. Why not?

Years ago when I was in college, my father unexpectedly appeared at my Homecoming Day football game. I played defense on the team, and during the first period of a game we were already losing badly, there he was, on the sideline near the end zone in his topcoat and Stetson. I intercepted a pass that day, and our team made a spectacular comeback in the fourth quarter to win, but even more amazing was that my dad had driven 300 miles to attend that game. Afterwards in the locker room, because we didn't know what to say to each other, because we never knew what to say, I told him I had a date, and he left for home, 300 miles in an empty car to an empty house.

There is no changing the past—I had told myself this a thousand times, especially in the years after coming to prison. But time as a spiral transcends linear time, and yet contains it. And so there are moments—a thought, a touch, a way of seeing the world—that radiate from the present not only to the future but to the past as well.

Near the end of the Sunday visiting hours, inmates and visitors are separated and herded to opposite areas, the visitors into a barred sallyport for exiting and the inmates to a hallway where they are strip-searched. Just before this, in the act of parting, inmates and visitors are permitted to hug and kiss briefly.

We stood, my son and daughter and I. My thought was that my daughter had never found it difficult to express her feelings or show affection in these situations, but I was not sure how my son would react. Before this day, I had not seen him in nearly a decade, not since he was eight years old, and all through the visit I kept thinking how much he looked and acted like me, and therefore how much he looked and acted like my father. And so we stood and faced each other, and there were no tears in my son's eyes nor in mine, and it was obvious that neither of us knew what to do with our hands...but then all three of us embraced, and suddenly it was so natural and easy for me to say how much I love him, how much I love them both. In that time-full moment, it occurred to me that my father was listening, that he had heard every word as clearly as if he were present. ❖

J.C. Amberchele is a prisoner in a private prison in Colorado. His writing has appeared in a number of literary magazines, and two of his short stories won the PEN prison writing contest. His work appears in the newly published anthology of prison writing called Doing Time, *edited by Bell Gale Chevigny (Arcade, 1999).*

The Standing Still Project

One Artist's Response to Environmental Degradation

By Standing Still:

- You reduce air pollution
- You slow the cutting of trees
- You stop consuming
- You avoid throwing things away
- You halt the race
- You remember what you forgot

Erica Fielder is an artist who teaches environmental art at the community college in Fort Bragg. She can be seen regularly standing with her sign on Main Street in Fort Bragg, California.

The Bond Between Women: A Journey of Fierce Compassion

by China Galland

Riverhead, 1998, 344 pp., $14 paperback

Reviewed by Joan Starr Ward

China Galland is on a quest: How can we in the West learn to be fierce *and* compassionate? In this book she takes us with her on her journeys through Nepal, India, Argentina, Brazil, and her home base in the San Francisco Bay Area, offering up a feast of spiritual, political, and personal reflections along the way.

Galland didn't set out to include the political, but she kept bumping into compelling stories she felt a need to follow. In Nepal, she was introduced to women working to fight the exploding international "trade" in children (some as young as six) for prostitution. In India, it was women protecting trees and cleaning up the Ganges. In Argentina, she met with the Mothers of the Disappeared, who have marched weekly since 1977, when the kidnapping, torturing, and deaths of nearly 30,000 people had just begun. In Brazil, Galland accompanied women working in slums to feed and educate throwaway children.

In between these inspirational stories, Galland retells myths of ferocious compassionate feminine dieties (for example, Durga, who saved the world, at least once before, from the brink of destruction), stories we sorely need to help us find our way out of the mess we're in. She describes encounters with spiritual teachers, and her own sometimes startled responses to sacred ceremonies and shrines. And as backdrop, she writes of being raped as a child and how as an adult she has sought healing.

I appreciate Galland's passion. Some pieces were riveting, waking me up like the hot sun on a summer morning, such as an interchange with Khenpo Choga, a merry Tibetan trickster. When Galland asked him what he would do if he saw a father selling his child into prostitution, he cheerfully replied, "It's her karma." She felt outraged. Then he skillfully proceeded to help her see how her attachment and anger are obstacles to compassion. If she were really compassionate, he told her, she would turn herself into a huge demoness, and, in a single instant, kill all who make such a terrible thing possible.

The book is full of stories for those of us wondering: Where are the women?

I wish, though, that Galland had focused on fewer stories. By the end I felt tired, as if I'd overeaten at an international buffet. Just the same, as a friend observed, her books are full of transmission teachings and therefore well worth reading. She has, I think, enough material to keep her busy contemplating and writing for a good many years to come. I hope she does.

Joan Starr Ward lives in Marin County. She recently added weaving to her spiritual practices.

Socially Engaged Buddhism for the Millennium: Essays in Honor of the Ven. Phra Dhammapitaka (Bhikkhu P. A. Payutto) on his 60th Birthday Anniversary

Edited by Sulak Sivaraksa, et al.

Sathirakoses-Nagapradipa Foundation, Bangkok; distributed in the U.S. by Parallax Press; 1999, 536 pp., $38 paperback, $60 clothbound

Reviewed by Ken Jones

> The 21st century will usher in a new epoch beyond what humankind has known before. For us to meet this challenge it is essential that we move *beyond the present tensions in our identities and cultures,* between pre-modern religion and modern science, and move towards a higher level of understanding and existence which integrates these two fields harmoniously. (p. 423)

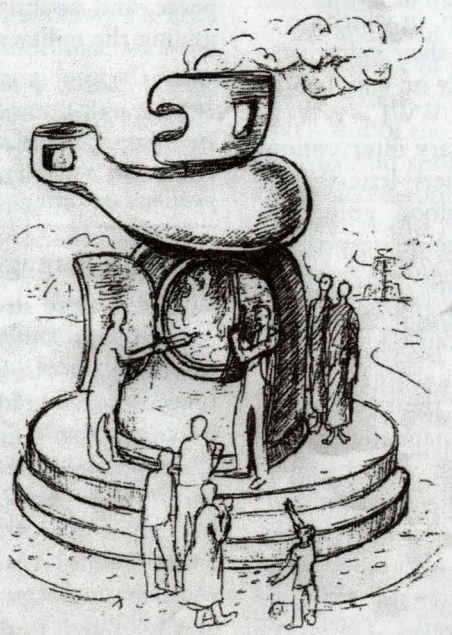
The words are by Jonathan Watts, one of the essayists in this substantive anthology, and I have added the italics to highlight the creative potential here. This is also a good place to begin a discussion of this book, because the work of Ajahn Dhammapitaka, to whom it is dedicated, has been very much focused on this integration. Out of the creative interaction of Buddhism and contemporary society there is emerging a Buddhism of modernity, or what another contributor, David Chappell, calls the New Buddhism: "Buddhism is in the midst of a sea change, a shift so pervasive that nothing is being left untouched." (p. 76)

It is worth noting that Engaged Buddhism is in fact only a part of this "New Buddhism." We have a long way to go before we achieve a New Buddhist fourth *yana* [vehicle]—if ever. Contributors to this book are still endeavoring to sew a seamless seam between the Dharma of mindfulness, compassion, inner peace, and so on, and ideas that have been, as Chappell says, "imported into Buddhism from our global interactive culture, including 'human rights,' 'gender inclusiveness,' 'sustainable development,' and 'economic justice.'" (p. 83)

Readers will be variously delighted and baffled by coming to grips with the contents and thumbing through the text. There are 38 contributors over 500 pages. It's like exploring a huge and diverse landscape garden, and although the book is divided into five main areas, you never know quite what you're going to find. And not only the range of topics is broad: academic analysis follows lively reportage follows scriptural interpretation follows an appeal to the heart. Oddly, there are no essays covering the personal caring-and-service end of socially engaged Buddhism, such as working with the terminally ill, homeless people, and prisoners.

The book gets off to a strong start with a section on Socially Engaged Buddhism, focusing on globalization issues. Stephanie Kaza has a particularly thorough 20-page study on "Overcoming the Grip of Consumerism." David Loy offers an innovative explanation of the process by which our sense of *lack* translates historically and socially into delusive, self-aggrandizing institutions—the nation-state, corporate capitalism, and mechanistic science. Because we are unaware of this process, "these institutions have taken on lives of their own which subordinate us to them." (p. 109)

A valuable and compact section on Buddhism and contemporary Thai society contrasts with a wide-ranging one on Buddhism and nonviolence, with pieces on Buddhist self-immolation, religious aggression in South Korea, and five more general essays offering very diverse approaches.



Venetia Walkey, illustration from "Dhamma Park" in Socially Engaged Buddhism.

This brings us to Venetia Walkey's "Dhamma Park," in the section on Buddhist Arts for Contemporary Society. This project is to "invigorate and enable people of all ages, races and beliefs...to have FUN in the Dhamma—the true nature of reality, rather than escaping from it." (Walkey's account is accompanied by photographs of some of her sculptures.) Thus "Craving is symbolized in this abstract piece [illustration at left] whose hollow places can never be filled"—also designed as an incinerator "for recycling rubbish and for the symbolic cremation of addictions." (p. 378) The rest of this miscellaneous section includes discussions of agriculture, education, a serviceable account of Buddhist Core Process Psychotherapy, and Robert Aitken on "Milan Kundera and the Four Noble Truths." The section on Buddhism and the environment centers satisfyingly on three essays on the Forest tradition and what it has to offer the modern world.

So many books on engaged Buddhism have been anthologies such as this one, and in some the message

(continued on page 36)

Hell, Healing and Resistance: Veterans Speak

by Daniel Hallock; Foreword by Thich Nhat Hanh; Preface by Philip Berrigan

Plough Publishing, 1998, 434 pp., $25 clothbound

Reviewed by Sherdyl Motz

In his foreword to Daniel Hallock's *Hell, Healing and Resistance,* Thich Nhat Hanh writes about being mindful that it is the consciousness of every being, not just of the politicians and generals, that leads to war and violence. This book sets out to examine the reality of war through the lived experiences of those who fight them. To paraphrase the author/editor: in order for us to heal, let us speak. And veterans do indeed speak their pain and trauma here.

The book has a broad scope and, chapter by chapter, it presents a wide-ranging discussion of the practice and culture of war and its effects on individuals and, by extension, human society. In the chapter called "The Sell," Hallock describes the strategies used by military recruiters and the trauma of boot camp, in which people are systematically dehumanized and their individuality crushed so that they will kill willingly on command.

"Bloody Century" deals with WWI, WWII, Vietnam, the Gulf War, and U.S. military intervention in Central America. Excerpts from soldiers' letters illustrate in sometimes graphic detail the blood, gore, and brutality of combat. Describing how the military abandons soldiers who can no longer "perform," a vet writes, "Finally I fell apart—complete emotional collapse—and they sent me home. Not because I fell apart, but because I had nothing left."

"The Change is Forever" is about "the real experience of war that has the power to permanently cripple the human psyche." I can attest to this: 32 years after Vietnam, I still jump and look for cover at the sound of a car backfiring. This chapter discusses Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) in great detail, with many first-person examples of its devastating effects not only on vets but on their loved ones and caregivers.

"The Silenced Majority" examines institutional racism against blacks, Chicanos, and Native Americans and sexism against women in the armed forces. "Worth the Price" discusses the damages to noncombatants in Iraq, Vietnam, WWII, and El Salvador.

"Hush" takes on the military policy of silence and its cover-up of war atrocities, from Hiroshima and the rape of Nanking in WWII to Agent Orange and the My Lai massacre in Vietnam, American-trained death squads in Central America, and Gulf War Syndrome. "God on Our Side" describes the outrageous practice of justifying war through distortion of religious principles.

While the bulk of the book is a forum for vets to speak of the hell of their experiences, the last section focuses on inspiring stories of resistance and healing. In "The Other Veterans," those who opposed war both in the U.S. and abroad talk about their heartfelt antiwar convictions. "Against the Stream" examines the civilian antiwar movement and includes a long, poignant anaylsis by Thich Nhat Hanh and Daniel Ellsberg.

"The Healing of the Sangha" shows that the aftermath is in some ways harder to adjust to than the violence and carnage of battle, for wars continue to be fought in the minds of combatants. "An American Story" and "The Road to Peace" continue this theme with stories of healing, as well as the stories of some who were never healed. Appendix A contains a very useful list of resources for veterans, dissenters, and conscientious objectors.

Overall, *Hell, Healing and Resistance* is a hard-hitting discourse on the nature of war and its costs to participants and to those who love them. I am also a veteran, and this book spoke strongly and, at times, painfully to me. I cried several times while reading it. This book is important reading for all those who want to understand the reality of war in order to create a culture of peace, and essential reading for anyone contemplating joining the military. ❖

Sherdyl Motz is a Sufi/Buddhist, a published author, and a Website/graphic designer and digital artist. He served in the river patrol force in the Mekong Delta in 1967 and afterwards became an antiwar protester. His writing has been previously published in Turning Wheel.

Socially Engaged Buddhism, continued

has been more strongly pulled together editorially. In their classic *Engaged Buddhism: Buddhist Liberation Movements in Asia,* editors Christopher King and Sallie Queen contributed unifying fore and aft essays, established uniform and specific guidelines for essays, and provided an index. The absence of these features from *Socially Engaged Buddhism for the Millennium* makes it less useful than it might have been. Still, it remains an ambitious and remarkable achievement, and readers will certainly find a great variety of interest and stimulus in an exploration of this book.

All new fields of knowledge necessarily start with a "collecting together" phase. Each contributor independently offers his or her wares. Surely our next aim should be to develop a field of discourse, of constructive yet critical dialogue with each another. We could begin by trying to map out the New Buddhism, using collections like this one. In the meantime, this miscellany is heartening evidence of the vigor, diversity, and rapid growth of a Buddhism of modernity. ❖

Please see page 26 for biographical note on Ken Jones.

Samsara: A Film about Survival and Recovery in Cambodia (1989, 29 min.), *Satya: A Prayer for the Enemy* (1993, 28 min.), and *Sacrifice: The Story of Child Prostitutes from Burma* (1998, 50 min.)

Three films by Ellen Bruno

Distributed by Film Library, 800/343-5540; or via Website: www.brunofilms.com

Regret to Inform (1998, 72 min.)

A film by Barbara Sonneborn

Distributed by Sun Fountain Films, 510/548-5908; or via Website: www.regrettoinform.org

Reviewed by Marianne Dresser

Most of us are familiar with the oft-repeated rule of good writing: "show, don't tell." Documentary filmmakers, working in their multilayered medium, have greater latitude to both show *and* tell. A compelling film narrative, reinforced through the skillful use of image and sound, can reach very deeply into the viewer's heart.

The stories told in award-winning documentaries by Bay Area-based filmmakers Ellen Bruno and Barbara Sonneborn are certainly compelling. Bruno's film trilogy explores the harsh histories and difficult situations endured by people—especially women and children—in Cambodia, Tibet, and Burma. Sonneborn's *Regret to Inform* invites viewers along on her journey to come to terms with the death of her soldier husband in Vietnam. These films are not "easy viewing." They give a voice—often painfully direct—to the extremes of human suffering: war, oppression, rape, torture, exploitation, fear, death. So why should we want to see them? Because through them, we share in the powerful act of bearing witness.

Each of Bruno's films begins with a brief outline of the political/historical background and current situation of its respective country. Then the story unfolds directly through firsthand accounts. In *Samsara,* Cambodians tell of their efforts to rebuild their lives and country after "Pol Pot time." In *Satya,* Tibetan nuns speak of their nonviolent resistance to Chinese rule and of being tortured and raped in reprisal. *Sacrifice* tells the story of the young girls from Burma who have been sold or forced by economic circumstance into prostitution. *Samsara,* the earliest of the three films, uses a straightforward documentary approach: interview sequences intercut with elegantly photographed scenes of contemporary Cambodia. A more fluid visual style emerges in *Satya* and *Sacrifice.* Blurred motion, oblique angles, abstract images, and other visually arresting techniques evoke viscerally the harrowing details of the women's stories, which are also related in voice-over.

Wisely, and with a deft touch, the filmmaker drops in moments of stillness and surprising beauty—a flame burning in a butter lamp, light and shadow moving across a softly rustling stand of bamboo—visual resting places that allow the viewer to regroup and reground. The spare soundtracks rely on natural ambient sound, and each film is bookended by a plaintive chant or song. Given the gravity of the material, this reflective, poetic cinematic style works to great advantage. A conscientious and compassionate presence permeates these films. They both reveal and mourn.

In Bruno's works the filmmaker remains off-camera; in *Regret to Inform* Diane Sonneborn puts her own story right up front. The film chronicles her quest to understand her unresolved grief over the death of her young husband in Vietnam, a death that still haunts her decades later. To get at its roots, she decides to visit the place where he was killed. *Regret to Inform* expands from this narrative framework into a moving exploration of the terrible human cost of war—regardless of its political justification (or lack of it), its "rightness" or "wrongness."

Vietnamese widows of the "American war" share their stories of loss, of living in a war zone, of how they coped and what they had to do to survive. American widows speak of reading between the lines of their husband's letters, trying to understand the reality of their lives—and of the war. As Sonneborn says, while she and her husband spoke of her fear of his being killed, "we never talked about the fact that he would have to kill." The widow of a Native American soldier tells of her husband's unease with fighting a war against a people whom he so closely resembled: "same skin color, same height...what was he doing there?" The silence behind this unanswered question is another terrible legacy of war borne by these women, who must somehow reconcile to their losses without even the cold comfort of a palliative ideology. "I don't think of my husband as a murderer," one American woman says, "but at the same time we have to see it for what it is."

As the film evolves, the intermingling of these American and Vietnamese voices underscores their devastating commonality of sorrow and anger. Skillfully edited archival footage—uncannily familiar images to those of us who grew up with the "television war"—further brings home the reality of war's devastation. The film is never didactic. Firmly rooted in the lived experience of the mothers, wives, and children left behind—who have always been the bearers of war's aftermath—*Regret to Inform* delivers a powerful antiwar message. (The film will be aired on PBS' *POV* series, January 24, 2000, at 10:00 P.M.) ❖

Editor/writer Marianne Dresser is Book Review Editor for Turning Wheel. *She lives in Oakland, California.*

Buddhist Women Across Cultures: Realizations

Edited by Karma Lekshe Tsomo

State University of New York Press, 1999, 320 pp., $21.95, paperback

Reviewed by Phelps Feeley

Buddhist Women Across Cultures is an exceptional anthology that will appeal to anyone interested in Buddhism, women's studies, or international relations. The well-researched, inquisitive, and lively essays in this volume present the voices of 14 women and one man from diverse backgrounds and contexts—laypeople, academics, and monastics from Asia, North America, and Europe, and from Theravadin, Mahayana, and Vajrayana traditions.

The essays were originally presented at the 1987 International Conference on Buddhist Nuns in Bodh Gaya, India. Editor Karma Lekshe Tsomo, one of the leading organizers of the conference, put together this collection "to document Buddhist women's actual involvement [in Buddhist tradition] including their self-reflection, interactions, and interpretations of the tradition...part of the ongoing process of women transforming and being transformed by the tradition." The book is divided into two sections and five subsections: Buddhist Women in Asian Traditions: South Asian, East Asian, and Tibetan Traditions; and Contemporary Buddhist Women: Forging Identity and Shaping New Traditions.

Subjects and methodologies also vary: several pieces focus on textual analysis, as in Elizabeth J. Harris' discussion of the symbolic and conventional representations of attaining enlightenment in a woman's body, or Beata Grant's look at the variety of life experiences of Buddhist nuns in imperial China, unearthed through their own writings. Also notable are Tsomo's piece on the similarities and differences between Buddhist and Christian women's experiences; the pragmatic "Model for Laywomen in Buddhism" by the Western Buddhist Order's Sanghadevi; Anne Klein's challenging theoretical essay, "East, West, Women, and Self"; and Rita Gross' thought-provoking "Feminism, Lay Buddhism, and the Future of Buddhism."

Seyarat Wijayasundara makes a convincing case for "Restoring the Order of Nuns to the Theravada Tradition." Straightforward and clear, Wijayasundara illuminates the lack of an essential component of Buddhist society when female ordination is barred. Drawing on sutta passages and the work of World Fellowship of Buddhists founder G. P. M. Malalasekara, he asserts six different means of reinstating nun ordination that are consistent with textual authority. He states unequivocally that "the inability of Theravadin tradition to meet the legitimate demands of women to practice Buddhism equally makes it vulnerable to criticism.... [I]t is imperative for the Theravadin tradition to meet this serious challenge and open its doors." (p. 83)

In "Japanese Buddhist Nuns: Innovators for the Sake of Tradition," Paula K. R. Arai traces the history of the courageous women who were the first ordained Buddhists in Japan, through the major shifts and challenges met by Japanese nuns in the last century. Particularly provocative is the resolution/manifesto written by the 49 nuns who founded the first authorized monastic school for women in 1903:

> [A] great number of monastic women have endured miserable conditions and the situation has not changed much over time. However, we will not permit the flow of history to stop and leave us in our current situation.... [W]e monastic women, too, must awaken from our deep slumber.... We must succeed in attaining our original destiny, and in so doing let us claim the natural rights that we deserve but have not yet gained! (p. 113)

Sara Shneiderman, a self-identified young Western feminist, gives an accessible and refreshing review of her own research in Nepal and India. She takes a critical look at the role of Western women in monastic settings, noting the considerably improved access they have to philosophical textual resources when compared to the limited access granted indigenous Asian women: "I was disturbed by the sense that this [Western] nun, and others like her, had appropriated traditions that should have been, but were not, equally accessible to the ethnically Tibetan women themselves. It seemed that they had extracted these traditions to fit their own educated, Western context, without fully considering the implications that this appropriation might have for their indigenous ethnically Tibetan counterparts." (p. 226)

The subtitle of Janice D. Willis' piece on past and present Tibetan Buddhist women practitioners, "A Garland to Delight Those Wishing Inspiration," could serve to describe this entire collection. In addition to the essays that enticed me and left me wanting more, the book's ample bibliography is a treasure in itself. And I found that the stories of conviction found here inspired me to greater determination in my own practice.

Living at a residential Zen center I have been able to be a part of one sangha; through reading this book I was able to become part of another. The benefits of gathering and sharing wisdom across cultural lines and contexts are far reaching. *Buddhist Women Across Cultures* takes a bold and exciting step in this direction, offering up intriguing perspectives on the multiplicity of women's lifestyles and practice issues, feminist analysis, and an evolving Buddhist tradition. ❖

Phelps Feeley was living and practicing at Tassajara Zen Center when she wrote this review. She is now traveling in Asia, and will attend the international Sakyadita conference for Buddhist women in Lumbini, Nepal, in February 2000.

Books in Brief

Enlightenment Unfolds: The Essential Teachings of Zen Master Dogen

Edited by Kazuaki Tanahashi
Shambhala, 1999, 311 pp., $30 clothbound

This is an important new collection of writings by Eihei Dogen, the thirteenth-century founder of Soto Zen, translated by artist/activist/scholar and longtime BPF friend Kaz Tanahashi, in collaboration with a baker's dozen of Zen teachers and writers, many of whom will be familiar to readers of *Turning Wheel* (Norman Fischer, Taigen Leighton, Alan Senauke, Susan Moon). *Enlightenment Unfolds* contains works written by Dogen throughout his life, presented in chronological order, with excellent scholarly references. It includes a number of selections which appear here in English for the first time. Here we find Dogen at his most practical, asking for donations to build a monks' hall 70 feet square (p. 48), as well as the Zen master at his most mystical: "Without being within a dream, there is no expression of dreams. Without expressing dreams, there is no being within a dream." (p. 167) A must for Soto Zen practitioners and anyone serious about Dogen.

Warm Smiles from Cold Mountains: Dharma Talks on Zen Meditation

by Reb Anderson
Rodmell Press, 1999, 173 pages, $12.95 paperback

Originally published in 1995 by the San Francisco Zen Center, this beautifully designed new edition of *Warm Smiles* organizes the material more logically and contains an additional lecture: a basic encouragement to new students on zazen practice. Susan Moon's foreword takes us into the zendo where Reb Anderson delivered the talks from which the book is drawn. Although focused primarily on meditation practice, these talks also address living in the suffering world: "The goal of zazen practice is the enlightenment and liberation of all beings from suffering."

Global Healing: Essays and Interviews on Structural Violence, Social Development, and Spiritual Transformation

by Sulak Sivaraksa
Thai Inter-Religious Commission for Development, Bangkok; distributed in the U.S. by Parallax Press, 1999, 171 pp., $15 paperback

This anthology of 23 short pieces ranges from "God from a Buddhist Perspective" to "Skillful Means of Social Activism," from "Structural Violence and Spirituality" to "Sulak explains his work to the Korean NGOs." A good pick-up-and-put-down type of book, by the end the reader will have a comprehensive understanding of engaged Buddhism in general and of Sivaraksa's contribution in particular. —*Ken Jones*

The Heart of Learning: Spirituality in Education

Edited by Steven Glazer
Jeremy P. Tarcher/Putnam, New York, 1999, 288 pp., $15.95 paperback

This book consists of selected and revised keynote presentations from the Spirituality in Education Conference hosted by The Naropa Institute in Boulder, Colorado, in 1997. Contributors include Parker Palmer, Dr. Rachel Naomi Remen, the Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Judith Simmer-Brown, bell hooks, Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi, and Huston Smith. From the Introduction: "The main objectives of *The Heart of Learning* are to (1) establish the understanding that true learning requires openness to the unknown, to mystery; (2) establish awareness and wholeness as important, necessary goals of education; (3) help people understand that learning, as a process of transformational growth, requires—in addition to conceptual and physical mastery—dynamic interpersonal (and interactive) work; and (4) offer tools, information, and resources to make spirituality in education a viable, rewarding approach." —*Mushim Ikeda-Nash*

The Red Thread of Passion: Spirituality and the Paradox of Sex

by David Guy

Shambhala, 1999, 192 pp., $22 clothbound

David Guy sets himself the task of demonstrating how sexuality and spirituality are inextricably linked. He begins with an examination of his own life, tracing the connections and cross-connections he made between the two while growing up. He then turns to the lives of others, some famous (Walt Whitman, Alan Watts), others less well known (Carol Queen, Joseph Kramer), to elaborate how these two vital strands of human behavior intertwine. The departure point is a Zen koan that he returns to like a touchstone:

> In order to know the Way in perfect clarity, there is one essential point you must penetrate and not avoid: the red thread [of passion] between our legs that cannot be severed. Few face the problem, and it is not at all easy to settle. Attack it directly without hesitation...for how else can liberation come?

The text offers various responses to this question posed by Zen master Ikkyu.

Combining two topics that are beyond the conversational boundaries of most people makes for an especially rich book. While most readers probably have not and will not explore sexuality in the same ways some of Guy's examples do, there is much to be learned from reading about their experiences. The author's engaging style makes you feel you are in good company for this exploration of the territory where creative energy meshes sex and spirit.

—Barbara Hirshkowitz

Subverting Hatred: The Challenge of Nonviolence in Religious Traditions

Edited by Daniel L. Smith-Christopher

Boston Research Center for the 21st Century, 1998, 178 pp., $10 paperback

This compact and very packed book strives mightily to demonstrate the theory and practice of nonviolence in nine different religious traditions: Jain, Buddhist, Hindu, Taoist, Confucian, Christian, Islam, Jewish, and Native American. The introduction and epilogue are useful, framing the problem that all religions have traditions of both war and peace and have used dogma and doctrine at various points in history to either support or prevent violence. The epilogue draws out the commonalities across traditions in four broad categories: worldview and practice, symbols and stories, inner peace and world peace, and weakness and strength. Each author takes a scholarly approach and provides the reader with many points of departure for further exploration.

In the Foreword, Daisaku Ikeda, president of Soka Gakkai International, writes: "It is my sincere hope that the publication of this book will encourage many dialogues, which will instill in people everywhere the courage to take on the 'challenge of nonviolence' and the tenacity to work creatively toward a just, peaceful, and humane world." This book does its part well; the rest is up to us.

—Barbara Hirshkowitz

WALKING A FALL DAY

I look up
At an electric power line

To hear
Its low threaded whip
Of voltaic hum

After picking up From a dry
Creek bed A lump of coal
The size of a stone hatchet
In my right hand

A diamond? Never before
Had I believed
I was eternal
Nor that light could wear
So many faint disguises

—John McKernan

Path without Destination: The Long Walk of a Gentle Hero

by Satish Kumar

Eagle Brook/William Morrow and Co., 1999, 310 pp., $22 clothbound

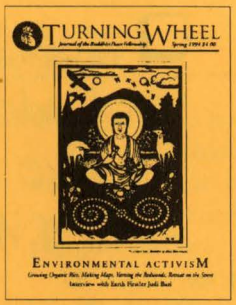
This autobiography tells of the extraordinary life of Satish Kumar, now 63 and a resident of Devon, England. Born in India, Kumar left home at nine to join a group of wandering monks. He later left the monks to become a disciple of Vinoba Bhave, a follower of Gandhi. In the 1960s Kumar set out on a peace pilgrimage, traveling around the world without money or passport and maintaining a vegetarian diet. He became part of the "small is beautiful" movement started by E. F. Schumacher, and founded *Resurgence* magazine to spread information about ecological and decentralized philosophy and practice. Kumar and his family truly live the simple life that he expounds, illustrated in this description of their move to England from Wales:

> On the last day of July we hired a small moving van. Packing was painless. We had only a small number of possessions; back issues of *Resurgence* and our family belongings all fit in, and what did not, we gave away. Our friend...John Seymour offered to drive us to Devon, since neither June nor I had a driving license.

Kumar's straightforward narrative, told in great detail, has much to teach us: this wise man certainly walks his talk.

—Barbara Hirshkowits

❑ Yes! I would like to join the Buddhist Peace Fellowship and receive a subscription to *Turning Wheel.*



❑ New ❑ Renewal

❑ $35 – 1 year ❑ $65 – 2 years ❑ $90 – 3 years

❑ $20 – Simple Living/Low Income/Student (1 year)

Outside of the U.S. please add $5/year.

❑ Payment Enclosed ❑ Visa ❑ Mastercard

Card #:_____ Exp. Date:_____

Signature:_____

Name_____

Address_____

City/State/Zip_____

Country_____

Phone_____

Use the reverse to give a gift subscription!

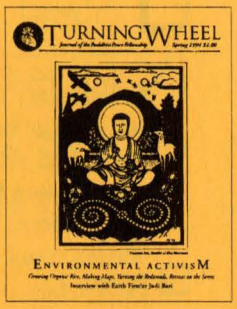
Please send card and payment to:

Buddhist Peace Fellowship
P.O. Box 4650
Berkeley, CA 94704-0650.

Credit card orders, call or fax us at:
Tel. (510) 655-6169; Fax. (510) 655-1369.

printed on recycled paper

❑ Yes! I would like to support the Buddhist Peace Fellowship and give a gift subscription to *Turning Wheel*.



❑ New ❑ Renewal

❑ $35 – 1 year ❑ $65 – 2 years ❑ $90 – 3 years

❑ $20 – Simple Living/Low Income/Student (1 year)

Outside of the U.S. please add $5/year.

❑ Payment Enclosed ❑ Visa ❑ Mastercard

Card #:_____ Exp. Date:_____

Signature:_____

FROM: ❑ I would like this gift to be anonymous.

Name_____

Address_____

City/State/Zip_____

Country_____

Phone_____

Please send the subscription to:

Name_____

Address_____

City/State/Zip_____

Country_____

Gift Subscriptions

What You Can Do about Time!

The earth is hurtling at 18,000 miles a second around the flaming star that is our heat source, and its surface whirls at approximately 1000 miles per hour in its continual dance with itself. How fast are you hurtling through your day and dancing through your life?

In this speeded-up time we are in, where the immediate prevails over the long term, slowing down is a radical act in itself. In taking our time, we are shifting our allegiance to a more deliberate, connected relationship with our world. When we act quickly, or take shortcuts to "save" time, we often do so at a hidden cost to ourselves and the planet. We may appear to gain something—whether it is high yield on an investment, a take-out dinner with no dishes to wash, instant information through the Internet, or one-stop shopping at a department store. But who gains and who loses? Does our ecosystem gain? Do our families? Families in Mexico? Corporations? Our great-grandchildren?

In slowing down, we can subvert the dominant culture's insistence on the importance of convenience and comfort in the immediate present and its constant message that there isn't enough time. We lengthen our focus to the next year, the next decade, and the next millennium. So, instead of listing books and resources as I usually do in this column, I would like to suggest a couple of ways we might shift our perspective.

Taking our Time

I myself have just taken a long, slow leap into taking my time. With my partner and daughter, I have recently moved to a rural intentional community that is aiming at self-sufficiency. This move has drastically changed how I spend my time, and has also confronted me with inconsistencies in my value system. Self-sufficiency, as any farm family knows, takes a lot of time! I spend my time taking care of the basics of life: making bread and soy milk, building, repairing, gardening, doing childcare. And my Western mind is continually devaluing these tasks, and then recalculating these values. My appointment book remains empty as I happily stay on the land for days at a time.

Here in the woods of Northern California, I am experiencing the effects of slowing down. Using solar power to generate our electricity takes more time, thought, and energy than flipping a switch. How does this task help our world? I am beginning to measure the worth of something by how little trace it leaves, and how grounded it makes me feel, not by how productive I have been or how fast I can do it. As I learn to maintain a solar energy system I feel the weight of my complicity with some of the destructive trends in our culture lift slightly and my ability to connect grow slightly.

And in this easing of the psychic numbing of my consciousness, I can open to my connection to the natural world and its energies and forces, and see my path a little more clearly.

Of course not everyone can go live in the woods; nor should they. But we can all study how we value our time, how much or little we do to save time, how much time it actually takes (and whose time?) to generate the electricity we use, for example, and what the costs are, both personally and globally.

Take a week to examine what you do to "save" time, and what the short-term and long-term effects are. How does it feel in our bodies when we "save time" by leaving on lights or computers? By driving rather than walking? How does it affect our connection to ourselves and the earth to leave all our appliances and electronics plugged in when we are not using them? (They draw energy even when off.) How much time would it take to unplug things and feel the relief of the lessening of our impact on the earth's resources? How can we help each other in this exploration?

Expanding our Sense of Time

Activists are used to a great sense of urgency about whatever issue we are working on. Rarely do we feel a spaciousness in this work. Let's expand our sense of time in two ways—by moving beyond a focus on the present, and by not being panicked by how little time we have.

Joanna Macy helps us take a long view of time by invoking the beings of past, present, and future in her work (*World as Lover, World as Self,* Parallax Press, 1991). Calling forth these beings helps us find strength in that connectedness, and sparks us to a profound examination of our actions.

How would we live if the generations to come were real to us? What if we always considered the effects of public policy on the seventh generation after us? How do we keep alive all the beings who have come before us and who have much to teach us?

While our sense of urgency can spur us to action, it can also immobilize us in fear, or produce unskillful, unconsidered action as well as burnout. How do we keep the spark of compassion alive without feeling overwhelmed by the tasks at hand? Knowing how little time is left to save the last of the redwoods, how do we keep from becoming paralyzed? Instead, can we, as Joanna Macy says, "break free of our fear of time so that time may continue? Can we become friendly with time and reinhabit time, that our days on this Earth may be long?" ❖

—Margaret Howe

"I have so much to do today, I need to meditate twice as long." —Mohandas Gandhi

Director's Report

Six weeks ago, just as autumn was officially arriving, I went to a cardiologist at Berkeley's Alta Bates Hospital, suffering from chest pains. Within six hours I was admitted, angiogrammed, and had a stainless steel stent placed in my right coronary artery. The next morning I was released, feeling considerably better than I had the day before. All of this did not come as much of a surprise. Twelve years ago, at the tender age of forty, I had a balloon angioplasty in another coronary artery. This is the genetic fate of many in my family, no matter how healthily we have been living. All of these procedures involve threading a thin catheter up from a place of entry in the leg, into the heart itself, having a look around, then expanding any blocked vessel. A lot simpler than bypass surgery, but pretty intense nonetheless. After the first angioplasty, twelve years ago, I experienced a low-grade panic for a year afterward. This time the fear did not have very much of a grip on me, even though it feels like I have more to live for, and therefore, more to lose. I seemed to bounce back quickly—physically and emotionally.

I share this with you because this episode still takes up a lot of my psychic space. I am surprised that joy and ease were able to arise even in the difficult spaces, and that I find myself very much in the moment throughout the day. The only way I can explain this is as a fruit of dharma practice. Radical changes can happen in one's life and mind without a keen awareness of the process going on. As we say in Zen, it is like taking a walk in the fog and realizing after a while that one is completely soaked. I offer my own experience as encouragement to practice. And perhaps, by extension, there is something about crisis and change that translates from one's individual life to the life of society itself. It is a hopeful thought, but one that is tempered by the understanding that it is steady practice that creates the ground of change. What is the dharma practice of nations?

Meanwhile, since I was feeling pretty well after this run-in with Big Medicine, I traveled with Diana Lion and Maylie Scott to an interfaith meeting of contemplative prison workers at Upaya House in Santa Fe. It was a small but inspiring meeting that included meditation teachers, ex-prisoners, activists, and prison administrators, with the aim of creating a network or working group that reaches out even more widely. The group agreed on a preliminary shared mission and goals, and established committees to put together training manuals, a website and database, and to strategize about establishing more post-release programs. As a sidelight, it was wonderful to be there with Diana and Maylie, part of a team of BPF friends. But I will admit that there is also an oddness to meetings like this, where one travels to very beautiful places in order to sit inside and talk. Our ancestors would doubtless be puzzled by such behavior.

Speaking of ancestors, in November I presented a paper called "Vowing Peace in an Age of War" (You can find it on the BPF website <www.bpf.org>.) in a conference at Stanford honoring the 800th birthday of Dogen Zenji—teacher, writer, philosopher, and founder of Soto Zen in Japan, the school of Zen I practice. It was an honor to be there presenting, an honor that I feel was extended to BPF as well as to me personally. Being among 400 fellow students and teachers of the way—including Gary Snyder, Daido Loori, Blanche Hartman, my teacher Sojun Weitsman, and our Japanese counterparts—participating in an event of mutual acknowledgment between East and West, was an inspiring opportunity. I am still kind of floating in the afterglow.

Back in the office (I actually have spent some time there), we are getting down to brass tacks with our expanded staff. We are working on next year's budget and fundraising, writing new job descriptions, setting up at last a medical insurance group for the staff, and all the while trying to persevere with our programmatic work on BASE, prisons, international work, and *Turning Wheel*. I am excited to report that a new affiliate has been created by BPF members—the Burma People's Support Group that will offer substantial material aid and training resources to displaced Burmese, inside and outside Burma. This is a direct outgrowth of work that BPF has been doing for the last ten years. (Please contact me if you would like information about BPSG.)

The Board and Staff are also involved in a deep process of self-examination, what we call the Futures Committee, looking at our mission, vision, and strategies for Buddhist social change. This process has had several rebirths over the last three years, and this time around we want to reach out as well to BPF members and elders. We want to find ways to be more inclusive of our supporters and the wider community. And we also are looking more deeply at how we see social change and the dharma unfolding. More about this process as we go further into it.

Finally, a reminder to folks out there. Please check out the BPF website <www.bpf.org> from time to time. We hope to have a new webmaster in the coming weeks, which will insure more frequent updates. If you are interested in joining the BPF listserve/discussion group, send an email message to us at <bpf@bpf.org> and we will sign you up. ❖ —*Alan Senauke*

"Life is short. We must move very slowly."
—*Thai proverb*

BPF Activist News

BASE News

BASE's visioning process has continued in the past few months. We have identified the main program priorities for the upcoming years:

1) maintaining the original BASE program and the local groups in the Bay Area,
2) seeding BASE outside the Bay Area,
3) leadership development,
4) curriculum development,
5) bringing BASE to a wider community.

I'll fill you in on the implementation of these plans in the next issue.

Meanwhile, the **Bay Area Educator's BASE** program has been up and running since September. There are nine group members with jobs ranging from university to preschool teaching. They have been doing "way-seeking mind" talks each week, stories of people's lives and how they came to Buddhist and social action practice. They have chosen a few texts to work with: *Courage to Teach,* by Parker Palmer, *The Heart of Learning,* edited by Stephen Glazer, and *The Practice of Perfection,* by Robert Aitken. They held their first retreat last weekend in Marin with a dharma talk, hiking, singing, eating, and meditation.

In **Knoxville, Tennessee, a BASE group** has formed with 14 members. They meet monthly for retreats. The most recent retreat explored "Individual Reflections on the Shadow" and "Collective Reflections on the Shadow in Social Action." They used these questions to explore the nature of the group itself, and the day included meditation and silence. They ended their day with "international folk dancing."

Finally, Tova Green is organizing a new BASE program called "**Home BASE**." San Francisco Zen Center is co-sponsoring it and will provide additional mentorship. It will start in February 2000 and will focus on homelessness. The program is for people with jobs or volunteer work in services or in advocacy for the homeless. We are very excited to see this new BASE group form.

—Diana Winston, BASE Coordinator

Chapter and Activist News

What sustains a chapter? What is engaged Buddhist activism?

These questions became alive for me in my recent visits to chapters in **Sydney and Melbourne, Australia, Austin, TX, and Santa Fe, NM.** I gave a public talk at the Buddhist Library in Sydney called "A Wild Patience: Anger and Activism." The discussion that followed focused on East Timor, prompted by a question: "What is an engaged Buddhist response to East Timor?" Would a nonviolent peace force be more appropriate than sending Australian soldiers whose mission was peacekeeping? In Melbourne I met with chapter members and led a half-day Strategic Questioning workshop. In both Sydney and Melbourne, long-time chapter coordinators Gilly Coote and Jill Jameson were developing ways of sharing leadership with a wider group.

Back in the U.S., the **Texas Hill Chapter** invited me to lead a day-long workshop, "Meditation in Action." The night before the workshop I had dinner with a dozen chapter members from three cities and from many different sanghas. This year-old chapter is exploring what Buddhist activism is and struggling with whether or not to do actions together. Is "just sitting" a form of engaged Buddhism, as one member maintained? I flew from Austin to **Santa Fe**, where Alan Senauke and I met with BPF members who are in the process of forming a chapter. They were eager to explore the same questions that the Texas Chapter was grappling with.

I am often asked what other chapters or sanghas are doing. I hope the following brief reports of chapter activities will be inspiring to other chapters. The **Milwaukee, WI Chapter** organized the second inter-sangha Vaisakha Day in May, an ecumenical celebration of Buddha's birthday. One hundred participants from eight Buddhist communities and the general public recited the *Heart Sutra* in three languages and shared five kinds of noodles. Milwaukee has a new Chapter coordinator, Tonen O'Connor of the Milwaukee Zen Center.

The **East Bay CA Chapter** discussed the provocative article in the Fall issue of *Tricycle,* "Yasutani Roshi: The Hardest Koan," a look at the nationalism, militarism, and anti-Semitism of one of the most influential Zen masters in the transmission of Japanese Zen to the West.

In response to a call from the Fellowship of Reconciliation to hold vigils across the country on October 7 protesting hate violence, the **Zen Center of Hawaii** held a "Plant a Seed of Peace" day in their community garden. People came to the garden and planted seeds of peace (sunflowers) as an act of conscience. They hope that hundreds of sunflowers will be blooming in the garden by the end of the year.

At our recent BPF board meeting we discussed how chapters could play a more vital role in engaging BPF members all over the country. We welcome your suggestions about this. *—Tova Green, Chapter Coordinator*

ANNOUNCEMENTS & CLASSIFIEDS

NEVADA DESERT EXPERIENCE presents Millennium 2000: Walking the Ways of Peace, Religious Action for Disarmament. Dec. 30, 1999–Jan 2, 2000, in Las Vegas and at the Nevada Test Site, including special youth program. Co-sponsored by Fellowship of Reconciliation and other groups. Bring in a new millennium of peace and justice with a candlelight procession onto the test site! For info: Nevada Desert Experience, P.O. Box 4487, Las Vegas, NV 89127. 702/646-4814. <nde@igc.apc.org>.

BPF VOLUNTEERS NEEDED, WANTED, LOVED. In particular, we need help organizing our library of books and tapes—Come have a biblio-blast! Also, *Turning Wheel* can use your help. Call the office: 510/655-6169.

CALL FOR PAPERS *The Journal of Buddhist Ethics* is accepting proposals and manuscripts for its April 2000 online conference: "Socially Engaged Buddhism." Contact Charles S. Prebish, Pennsylvania State University, Religious Studies Program, 108 Weaver Building, University Park, PA 16802. 814/865-1121, fax: 814/863-7840, http://jbe.la.psu.edu.

CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION Across Cultures (CONTACT) is designed to strengthen and support the community building and conflict intervention efforts of peacebuilders from the U.S. and around the world. For information about our June 2000 Summer Institute in Vermont and our Graduate Certificate in Conflict Transformation, contact Center for Social Policy and Institutional Development, School for International Training, Kipling Road, P.O. Box 676, Brattleboro, VT 05302-0676 USA; Tel 802/258-3339, Fax 802/ 258-3248, Email: <cspid@sit.edu>, www.sit.edu/conflict.

HEALING RACISM IN OUR SANGHAS. How can we make our Western sanghas truly welcoming to people of all ethnic and racial groups? This question is the focus of monthly gatherings for Buddhist practitioners of color and of European American origin, at Empty Gate Zen Center, 2200 Parker St. in Berkeley, on the first Friday evening of each month from 7:00–9:30 PM. Info: 510/464-3012.

SANGHA FOR BUDDHISTS OF COLOR meets monthly in the San Francisco Bay Area, for meditation, dharma talks, and mutual support. For information, or to be placed on their email list, contact Lauren Leslie: 415/642-7202 or email: <bebuddha@hotmail.com>.

THE UNTRAINING is designed to help you "untrain" the subtle programming of white liberal racism. Put your meditative awareness to work for all beings. Ongoing groups: 510/235-6134.

PRISON SANGHA. Zen group in Ohio needs books, tapes, robes, incense, candles, malas. Please send to: Lotus Prison Sangha, c/o Ven. Shih Ying-Fa, Cloudwater Zendo, 21562 Lorain Rd., Fairview Park, OH 44126.

PRISON CHAPLAIN is attempting to establish regular Buddhist services and activities. To offer assistance, please contact Friar Ponchie Vasquez, OFM, at North Kern State Prison, P.O. Box 567, Delano, CA 93216, 661/721-2345 ext. 6862, <ponchie@lightspeed.net>.

PRISON DHARMA NETWORK (PDN) needs your donations of dollars and used Dharma books to continue making the Dharma available to prisoners. If you are interested in forming local or regional chapters to facilitate contemplative prison ministry, contact: PDN, P.O. Box 4623, Boulder, CO 80306-4623, 303/544-5952, <pdn@indra.com>.

GAY BUDDHIST FELLOWSHIP: sittings, speakers, and discussions every Thursday evening and every other Sunday morning in San Francisco. Classes, workshops, retreats, monthly potluck dinners, and work in Buddhist AIDS projects. Newsletter, with information and articles on topics of concern to gay Buddhists, available on request. (See inside back cover for address).

DIVERSITY AND SOCIAL CHANGE SANGHA. A sangha for those interested in blending mindfulness practice in the tradition of Thich Nhat Hanh with social change work meets weekly in Oakland. Contact Rosa at 510/534-6302.

HOMELESS AND HOUSED people meet weekly in Berkeley, CA, for meditation and discussion. Volunteers from Berkeley Zen Center and East Bay Insight Meditation facilitate sessions oriented toward stress reduction. Tea and cookies. Mondays, 7:30–9 PM, off the courtyard on the west side of Dana between Durant and Channing. For more info, call 510/548-0551.

HELP HOMELESS WOMEN AND CHILDREN by donating needed personal care items—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 information call 510/548-6933.

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.

KUSINARA, COMMUNITY FOR AGING BUDDHISTS: Visit our website at www.kusinara.org or send inquiry to Kusinara, General Delivery, Black Range Station, San Lorenzo, NM 88041.

QUERENCIA, NEW MEXICO Intentional village provides for all individuals to deepen and enrich their spiritual lives by residing in community and supporting each other through the aging process. Just 14 miles from Silver City, our beautiful, off-grid, tranquil setting has soaring views and total privacy. Also in the vicinity are several Buddhist Centers and a Sufi Community. We invite 40 individuals to participate in the purchase of 200 undivided acres. $13,500. Phone & Fax: 505/536-2917; email: <hardenbrook@gilanet.com>. Visit our website at www.gilanet.com/querencia.

FOR SALE: 20-acre organic farm in northern New Mexico. Contact Paul Michel, <ojitopaul@yahoo.com>. Web site: www.geocities.com/rainforest/jungle/9202.

NEW DALAI LAMA CD. Recorded during His Holiness' 1994 visit to Hawai'i, features excerpts from his talks and traditional Tibetan and Hawai'in chants and music. Proceeds to benefit Sakyadhita. To order: 808/944-6294, fax: 808/533-2513, <tsomo@hawaii.edu>.

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE BANNERS: Tibetan style prayer flags in English, using the literature and images of the world's spiritual traditions. See them at www.dharmabanners.com. $4 to $40. Mention *Turning Wheel* for 20 percent discount.

HELPING TURN THE WHEEL

BPF gratefully acknowledges contributions above membership received between July 1 & September 30, 1999:

Zomala Abell ❖ Diana Abrashkin ❖ Laurel Adler ❖ Chris Alex ❖ Katherine Allen ❖ Alison Alpert ❖ Steven Althoen ❖ Louise Altman ❖ John Anderson ❖ Rick Anderson ❖ Katherine Anderson ❖ Manuel Andrade ❖ Athena Angelus ❖ Clyde Appleton ❖ Jane Ariel ❖ Beverly Armstrong ❖ Karen Arnett ❖ Raymond Arthur ❖ Raymond Ball ❖ Lois Barber ❖ Richard & Adrienne Barhydt ❖ Richard Barnes ❖ Elsie Bartelt ❖ Mark Beck ❖ Matthew Bell ❖ Sylvia & Paul Bell-Tull ❖ Samuel Benner ❖ Frank Benson ❖ Eric Berger ❖ Steve Bergman ❖ Barry Bishop ❖ Willow Biwer ❖ Allan Bomhard ❖ David Bowman ❖ Kenneth Bradford ❖ David Brandmark ❖ Michael Brennan ❖ Raymond Brock ❖ Kathleen Bryant ❖ Rachel Buddeberg ❖ Joanna Bull ❖ Lea Burroughs ❖ Margery Cantor ❖ Deborah Carlin ❖ Ben Chapelle ❖ Pimporn Chavasant ❖ Elizabeth Chinery ❖ Valerie Chisholm ❖ Martin Chris ❖ John Christensen ❖ Stan Clark ❖ Michele Clark ❖ Alice Clawson ❖ Anne Clay ❖ Susan Clements ❖ Mary Coar ❖ Elizabeth Coe ❖ Casey Cohen ❖ Jerry Cohen ❖ Douglas Colberg ❖ Kay Coleman ❖ Patricia Coleman ❖ Marcie Colpas ❖ Karen Connelly ❖ Margo Conover ❖ Peter & Heidi Cranford ❖ John Cregier ❖ James Crouse ❖ Mary Rose Curtis ❖ Linda Cutts & Steven Weintraub ❖ Thomas Dakin ❖ Andrew Dalisa ❖ King Dan ❖ Marcella Davis ❖ Paul Davis ❖ Russell Delman ❖ David Depue ❖ Armand Diaz ❖ Kathleen Dickey ❖ Amie Diller ❖ Sarah Doering ❖ John Doherty ❖ Kate Dunn ❖ Fred Eckhardt ❖ Cynthia Embree-Lavoie ❖ Ingeborg Engle ❖ Steve Epstein ❖ Mary Fabri ❖ Patrick Ferris ❖ Richard Fireman ❖ Dot & John Fisher-Smith ❖ David Fishman ❖ Kenneth Ford ❖ Andrew Fort ❖ Helena Foster ❖ George Franklin ❖ Charles Freehof ❖ Ronald Frost ❖ Isao Fujimoto ❖ Brian Ganin ❖ William Gardner ❖ Clifford Garstang ❖ Richard Geller ❖ Karen Genter ❖ Valori George ❖ Barbara Gibson ❖ Rosalie Giffoniello ❖ Scott Glascock ❖ Mr. David Glaser ❖ Christine & James Glendening ❖ Brian Goller ❖ Barbara Goodman ❖ Aurelie Jones Goodwin ❖ Narayan Liebenson Grady ❖ Kirk Gray ❖ Tova Green ❖ Yakov Green ❖ Lisa Greene ❖ Michael Griffiths ❖ Winston Grizzard ❖ Dan & Marie Grussing ❖ Susan Gwynne ❖ Erik Hammerstrom ❖ Marsha Hansen ❖ Bob Hanson ❖ David Hanson ❖ Lynn Harmet ❖ Kai Harper ❖ Mrs. F. Harrington ❖ Brad Harris ❖ Sherry Harvey ❖ Lynn Hays ❖ Barbara Hazard ❖ Mary Heffernan ❖ Kevin Heffernan ❖ Keith & Lara Heller ❖ David Hempy ❖ Susan Henning & Hans Rainer ❖ Jan Herzog ❖ Pat Hinkley ❖ Paula Hirschboeck ❖ Barbara Hirshkowitz ❖ Lisa Hoffman ❖ Jill Holmes ❖ James Hopper ❖ Maurice Horn ❖ Mary Ann Huckabay ❖ Timothy Hurley ❖ Dawn Hutchinson ❖ Lorilyn Imbler ❖ Leavenworth Jackson ❖ Nancy Jaicks ❖ Gwyneth Jensen ❖ Patricia Jiminez ❖ Noel Johnson ❖ Dorothea Joos ❖ Patricia Jung ❖ Vicki Lynn Justice ❖ Vasken Kalayjian ❖ Nina Kalmoutis ❖ Micahel Keown ❖ Nancy Ketchum ❖ Michael Kieserman ❖ Terry Kinzel ❖ Tonya Kiser ❖ James Kline ❖ Anja Kollmuss ❖ Eric Kolvig ❖ John Koos ❖ Jan Kristiansson ❖ Donna Kwilosz ❖ Silvia Ladha ❖ Bayan Lair ❖ Christine Lane ❖ Stephen Lassiter ❖ Tanya Lasuk ❖ Doug Latham ❖ Ami Laws ❖ Jeffrey Lee ❖ Ben Lee & Juliette Guilbert ❖ Diane Lender ❖ Richard Lesnik ❖ Jay Leutwyler ❖ Mark Leventer ❖ Ed Levine ❖ Elder Linda ❖ Gloria Loew ❖ John Longeway ❖ Erica Lorenzen ❖ Jeannette Ludwig ❖ Lenore Luscher ❖ Kathryn Lynn ❖ Robert Lyons ❖ Ahna Machan ❖ Eda Marcus Malenky ❖ Thomas Mallabar ❖ Diana March ❖ Erick Marcks ❖ Genjo Marinello ❖ Paula Markham ❖ Dr. Michael Markowitz ❖ Ronald Martel ❖ John Martone ❖ Alan McCollom ❖ Shelley McEwan ❖ Grady McGonagill ❖ Megan McKenna ❖ Jan McMillan ❖ Erik Meitner ❖ Greg Mello ❖ Renny Merritt ❖ Catherine Merschel ❖ Thomas Miller ❖ David Mills ❖ Michael Moerman ❖ Anthony Moffa ❖ Brian Moore ❖ Don Morgan ❖ Victoria Mudd ❖ Patricia Murphy ❖ Michael Murphy ❖ Christopher Murray ❖ Suzette Myers ❖ Brian Nagata ❖ Carole Nelson ❖ Bruce Nevin ❖ Kha Nguyen ❖ Pamela Nicholls ❖ Pete Norby ❖ Susan Nummedal ❖ Patrick O'Donnell ❖ Peter Ott ❖ Ronald Ouellette ❖ Jerry Pace ❖ Candice Pacheco ❖ Elliot Packer ❖ Kathryn Pagliuso ❖ Eric Parker ❖ Ellen Pasternack ❖ Douglas Pengilly ❖ Julie Perry ❖ Beverly & John Petiet ❖ Alex Pham ❖ Chanin Philip ❖ Karen Phillips ❖ Billy Pick ❖ Suzanne Platoff ❖ Marc Poirier ❖ Vivian Pon ❖ Gerard Pope ❖ Susan Postal ❖ Ron Powell ❖ Paul Pozsgai ❖ Premena ❖ Rosaria Pugliese ❖ Cynthia Lynne Quick ❖ Grace Radin ❖ Todd Rambo ❖ Leslie Rawls ❖ Pearl Raz ❖ Satish Reddy ❖ Mark Redmond ❖ Joy Reese ❖ Rhoda Reilly ❖ Peter Reinhard ❖ Jose Reissig ❖ Bob Repoley ❖ Jean Reyes ❖ Daniel Rhodes ❖ Diane Rhorer ❖ Philip Richardson ❖ Margaret Robben ❖ Sterling Robbins ❖ David Rodriguez ❖ Charlotte Rosshandler ❖ Donald Rothberg ❖ Katherine Rousseau ❖ Ellen Rozett ❖ Claire Rubin ❖ J. Rubinowitz ❖ Deborah Russell ❖ Peter Rutter ❖ Fran Ryan ❖ Andy & Shanna Ryder ❖ Nora Ryerson ❖ Grace Sanchez ❖ Melissa Savage ❖ Horacio Scheimberg ❖ Eric Schlobohm ❖ Kurt Schultz ❖ Bonnie Schultz ❖ Prudence See ❖ Seth Segall ❖ Marty Seigel ❖ Mary Selkirk & Lee Ballance ❖ Jan Sells ❖ Sandra Shanaberger ❖ Judith Sharp ❖ John Sheehy ❖ Paul Shepard ❖ Amy Shima ❖ David Skinner ❖ John Slicker ❖ Angela Mariani Smith ❖ Cyndi Smith ❖ Gary Snyder ❖ Bernard Somers ❖ Dennis Sotala ❖ Blair Spangler ❖ Jennifer Sparks ❖ John Steiner ❖ Helen Hall Stephens ❖ Lee Steppacher ❖ Bartlet Steve ❖ Fortney Steven ❖ Michael Stone ❖ Steven Stucky ❖ Rhondalynn Summers ❖ Michael Sumner ❖ Louis Surgent ❖ Dave Sutton ❖ Arlene Swanson ❖ Carol Sword ❖ Joann Tall ❖ Kazuaki Tanahashi ❖ Richard Taylor ❖ *(continued on next page)*

❖ Yvonne Taylor ❖ David Tharp ❖ Angelica Theriot ❖ Antony Thier ❖ Gail Toby ❖ Margaret Torn ❖ Lana Touchstone ❖ Alexander Tribe ❖ Thomas Scott Tucker ❖ Allen Turner ❖ Lois Vanderkooi ❖ Ralph Vaughn ❖ Frank Vuotto ❖ Anneliese Wagner ❖ Dr. Thien Wah ❖ Ryan J. Waite ❖ Loraine Walsh ❖ Bernie Walters ❖ Brendajean Warner ❖ John Wasmund ❖ Karen Wegela ❖ Susan Weickum ❖ Robert Weiland ❖ Sandra Weinberg ❖ David Weinstein ❖ Arinna Weisman ❖ Mel Weitsman ❖ Kathy Whilden ❖ Edward White ❖ Allan Whiteman ❖ Allan Wilkinson ❖ Cynthia Willauer ❖ Matilda Williams ❖ Dorie Wilsnack ❖ Kerry Wilson ❖ W Janney Wilson ❖ Thia Wolf ❖ Eleanor Wolff ❖ Patricia Wood ❖ Margaret Wotkyns ❖ Barbara Wright ❖ David Wright ❖ William John Wright ❖ Key Wu ❖ Bohyun Sah Buddhist Temple ❖ Cambridge Insight Meditation Society ❖ Mount Equity Zendo ❖ South Carolina Department of Corrections ❖ **Thanks!**

For donations above and beyond the call of fundraising:

Alison Alpert ❖ Rita Archibald ❖ Jerry Bass ❖ Randi Brox ❖ Elizabeth Cheatham ❖ Martha & Lee De Barros ❖ John Denvir ❖ Julia Duane ❖ Ann Evans ❖ Leonore Fine ❖ Norman Fischer ❖ Gil Fronsdal ❖ Anne German-Moon ❖ Rhoda Gilman ❖ Anne Hench ❖ Donald Holland ❖ Nancy Hotchkiss ❖ Charles Howard ❖ Allan Hunt-Badiner ❖ Herb Isenberg ❖ Stephanie Kaza ❖ Kristina Kirkham ❖ Roy Korn, Jr. ❖ Dale D. Laney ❖ Paul Larose ❖ William Leslie ❖ Conny Lindley ❖ Reginald Louie ❖ Robert Lyons ❖ Phillip Moffitt ❖ Laurie Nadel ❖ Ulla Neuburger ❖ Pete Nelson ❖ Nancy O'Donnell ❖ Raymond O'Keefe ❖ Lauren Paquet ❖ Christopher Piel ❖ Walter Powers ❖ Jessie Ragsdale ❖ Judy Ramsy ❖ Tina Render ❖ Philip Roberts ❖ Eva Rosenthal ❖ Nancy Rudolph ❖ John Seed ❖ Joel Siegal ❖ Judith Stronach ❖ Gordon and Margo Tyndall ❖ Mary Kay Turner ❖ Lee Vogelstein ❖ Joan Starr Ward ❖ C. Wardrip ❖ Dean Witter Reynolds, Inc. ❖ Domini Investments ❖ The Fund for Nonviolence ❖ Ordinary Dharma ❖ The Vanguard Public Foundation ❖ **Thanks!**

Thank you to all our event and office volunteers, especially:

Kate Abbe ❖ Melody Ermachild Chavis ❖ Stan Dewey ❖ Paul Farber ❖ Greg Fain ❖ Lyn Fine ❖ Jane Heaven ❖ Annette Herskovits ❖ Lauren Leslie ❖ Bo and Sita Lozoff ❖ Judith McCullough ❖ Richard Page ❖ Mim Ribeiro ❖ Ida McCray Robinson ❖ Joel Siegel ❖ Tor Taylor ❖ Andrea Thach ❖ Kathy Wright and her whole sangha in Windsor, Colorado ❖ The Prison Mediation Network ❖ Sangha X ❖ **Thanks!**

BPF Chapters & Affiliates

Chapters

East Bay, CA
Sandy Hunter
510/548-7843

Green Gulch, CA
Nancy Petrin, Jeremy Levie
1601 Shoreline Highway
Sausalito, CA 94965
415/383-3134

Los Angeles, CA
Andrew Rasmussen
1166 N. Canyon Trail
Topanga, CA 90290-3604
310/455-3578

Sacramento, CA
Steve Walker
3550 Watt Ave. #2
Sacramento, CA 95821
916/481-0424

San Diego, CA
Ava Torre-Bueno
POB 33110,
San Diego, CA 92163
619/266-2442

San Francisco, CA
Paul Haller, S.F. Zen Center
300 Page St., S.F.,CA 94102
415/863-3136

Sonoma County, CA
Ella Rozett, POB 646
Grayton, CA 95444
707/874-3397

Tassajara, CA
Cristina Cruz
38171 Tassajara Road
Carmel Valley, CA 93924
408/659-2229

Colorado
Ven. Danan Henry
3101 W. 31st Ave.
Denver, CO 80211
303/405-1500

Honolulu, HI
Karma Lekshe Tsomo
400 Hobron Lane #2615
Honolulu, HI 96815
808/944-6294

Prairie Buddha, IL
Karuna Maduva
201 Forest Knoll Dr.
Palatine IL 60074
847/934-1711

Twin Cities, MN
Lee Lewis
1493 Lincoln Ave.
St. Paul, MN 55105
612/699-1330

Ithaca, NY
Joshua Moses
431 East Seneca St. #1
Ithaca, NY 14850
607/645-0026

New York, NY
Val DuBasky
463 West Street #G111
New York, NY 10014
212/691-2543

Triangle Area, NC
Hans Henning, 558 East Rd
Pittsboro, NC 27312
919/542-6060

Texas Hill Country
Travis Donoho
5412 Meg Brauer Way
Austin, TX 78749-2178
512/899-2537

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

Spokane, WA
Merry Armstrong, POB
31124, Spokane, WA 99223
509/455-3987

Milwaukee, WI
Tonen O'Connnor
2825 N. Stowell Ave.
Milwaukee, WI 53211
414/963-0526

Contacts

Arcata, CA
Mark Pringle, POB 2085
Trinidad, CA 95570
707/677-0429

Mid S.F. Peninsula, CA
Lance Miller
181 Second Ave., Suite 450
San Mateo, CA 94401
650/340-9698

Nevada City, CA
Daniel Flanigan
16874 Jackass Flats Rd.
Nevada City, CA 95959
916/292-1801

Central IL
John P. Martone
325 W. Tyler, Apt. B
Charleston IL 61920-1865
217/345-3915

Chicago, IL
Dave Reszak
9125 Mango Ave.
Morton Grove, IL 60053
847/966-1475

New Jersey (central)
Dodie Murphy
2 Windingbrook Road
Bordontown NJ 08501
609-291-1412

Santa Fe, NM
Ann Dasburg
50C LaBarbaria Trail
Santa Fe, NM 87505
505/982-8179

Northern Ohio
Matt Wascovich, POB 6592
Cleveland, OH 44101
216/556-2847

Yellow Springs, OH
Eric Lang
743 W. Sparrow Rd.
Springfield, OH 45502
937/327-9491

Oklahama
Katherine Williams
1021 Harding St.
Seminole, OK 74868
405/382-5723

Eugene, OR
Patrick Ejo McMullen
POB 744, Eugene, OR 97440
541/302-9242

Portland, OR
Bob Ryan
1845 Southeast Ladd Ave.
Portland, OR 97214
503/234-7713

New York Capital Area
Michael Fallarino
POB 178
Stuyvesant Falls, NY 12174
518/799-2118

Greensboro, NC
Daniel Rhodes, 6 Branch Ct.
Greensboro, NC 27408
336/274-7907

Philadelphia, PA
Barbara Hirshkowitz
4709 Windsor
Philadelphia, PA 19143
215/724-8131

Rhode Island, S.E. MA
Rebecca Capolungo-Hartman
Providence Zen Center
99 Pound Rd.
Cumberland, RI 02864
401/658-2499

Houston, TX
Wallace Craft,
11260 FM 1488
Conroe, TX 77384
409-321-2444

Vermont
Richard Dunworth
45 Pleasant St. Ext.
Ludlow, VT 05149
802-228-2476

Yakima, WA
Douglas C. Ray
261 Rowberry Way
Topenish, WA 98948
509/865-6045

Affiliates

Australia (Melbourne)
Jill Jameson, 50 Daveys Lane
Hoddles Creek, VIC 3139
61 3 596 74 372

BPF Australia (Sydney)
Gillian Coote
31 Bonnefin St.
Hunters Hill, NSW 2110

Buddhist Social Action Network of B.C.
Valerie Goodale
#24-710 West 15th St.
North Vancouver, B.C.
Canada V7M3K6

Network of Engaged Buddhists
Ken Jones, Plas Plwca,
Cwmrheidol, Aberystwyth,
Wales, U.K. SY23 3NB
01970/880 603

International Network of Engaged Buddhists
POB 19
Mahadthai Post Office
Bangkok, 10206, Siam
tel/fax: 662-433-7169

INEB Japan
Suzuki Ryowa,81 Honyashiki
Minowa Anjo, Aichi 446,
Japan,81-566-76-2486

BPF Bangladesh
Brother Jarlath D'Souza
St. Joseph's School
HsadGate, Mohammedpur
Dhaka, 1207 Bangladesh

BPF Ladakh
Ven. Bhikkhu Sanghasena
c/o Mahabodhi Centre
POB 22, Leh, Ladakh
194101 Himalaya, India

Burma People's Relief Group c/o Hal Nathan
POB 1018
Inverness, CA 94937
415/669-1954

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

Buddhist AIDS Project
555 John Muir Drive #803
San Francisco, CA 94132
415/522-7473

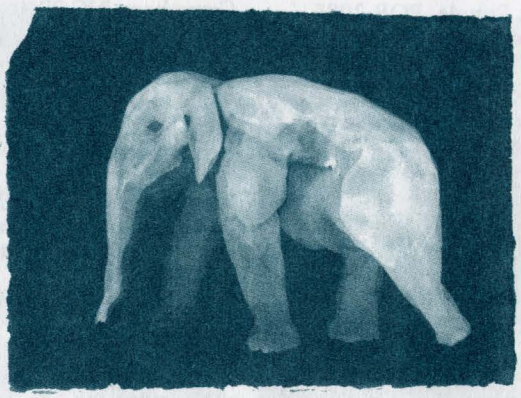
Gay Buddhist Fellowship
2236 Market St. #9
San Francisco, CA 94114
415/974-9878

Lesbian Buddhist Sangha
Carol Osmer-Newhouse
510/222-7787

Prison Dharma Network
POB 4623
Boulder, Co 80306-4623

We invite your submissions of articles, poems, and art for future issues of *Turning Wheel.*

- Buddhism and Human Rights—
  deadline: April 1, 2000
- Asian and Asian American Buddhists in the West—
  deadline: July 1, 2000
- Aging—
  deadline: October 1, 2000



Janet Culbertson

Thus shall ye think of all this
fleeting world:
A star at dawn, a bubble
in a stream,
A flash of lightning in a
summer cloud,
A flickering lamp, a phantom,
and a dream.

~The Diamond Sutra

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

Address Correction Requested
Forwarding & Return Postage
Guaranteed

Nonprofit
Organization
U.S. Postage
Paid
Permit No. 413
Berkeley, CA