



Creating Enlightened Community

Chicago is a Mandala by Alice Dan

A mandala is a sphere of energy that connects people together with the teachings of a lineage and to each other. It is the sum total of all our karmic connections.

- Richard Reoch, President of Shambhala International

I have been thinking about mandalas ever since President Reoch's visit to Chicago last October. Although mandalas have centers, they have no beginning and no end; their boundaries are permeable and fuzzy. A mandala has a center, but it is also a network of centers; like a hologram, the individual elements reproduce the energetic patterns of the whole. Each Shambhala Center is an element of the Mandala Council, while each member is an element of this community. Each of us is also the center of our own mandala, as we learn to "rule our world."

What does it mean to be the Shambhala Mandala in Chicago in 2007? How do we encourage exchanges of energy among members, from teachers to students and back?

The process of considering our options regarding physical space has led us to contemplate more deeply the nature and make-up of our community. The decisions we reach about how to proceed with our building will be shaped by the discussions generated about the community itself and its priorities for the coming year. The Listening Committee concluded its initial interview process in January and a preliminary report was presented to the sangha on Shambhala Day, February 18. Please see the Listening Committee Update on page 2 for a fuller review, as well as the report on Shambhala Day itself, written by and from the perspective of a new member.

In celebration of the individuals that are connected through the mandala of the Chicago Shambhala Center, we wish to welcome David Stone as Co-Director for Teaching. David was formally inducted into his new post on March 11. We also want to welcome Gina Caruso and Jon Feller as the new Co-Resident Directors of Shambhala Training effective April 1. We have several community members who took the Refuge and Bodhisattva Vows at a ceremony on March 8). Jennifer O'Hara has agreed to serve in a new position, as Shambhala Culture Coordinator. She will be coordinating the Contemplative Arts (Nalanda) programs, and uplifting our community celebrations.

Finally, we want to welcome the new members who were presented to the sangha gathered in the shrine room on Shambhala Day.

Mandala expresses a kind of unity that does not omit differences. Energy exchanges of all sorts - positive, negative, and neutral - go on all the time. Imagine a world in which people related to each other with compassion, loving-kindness, generosity, patience, and vicarious joy. Recently, I have come to appreciate the importance of vicarious joy to a community. Taking pleasure in the successes, accomplishments and good fortune of others is a powerful form of connecting with and supporting each other. I was fortunate to attend the Shambhala Mountain Center Winter Dathün as a Meditation Instructor, and I felt so encouraged by the genuine warmth and pleasure that members of our community expressed at my opportunity to do this. The support I received makes me in turn want to encourage all of you to have aspirations for developing your own path and practice. One way the Shambhala Center can support you is through the programs and classes we offer, and you can read about upcoming events in this newsletter. We can also help each other through supporting the Center's scholarship fund, and a new opportunity for generosity is the North American People of Color Scholarship Fund.

Recent Shambhala Council decisions included the renovation of an area on the second floor as a temporary Vajrayana Shrine Room. The Center's Administrative Office has moved to a room at the front on the second floor, and the Ikebana room shares space with the office computer available for general use. We also have a reconditioned office copier on which this newsletter was produced.

As we move into the Year of the Fire Pig, the Council approved the following directions to guide our Chicago Mandala:

- 1) Strengthen our focus on practice
 - complete the Vajrayana shrine room
 - institute quarterly, day-long meditation retreats at the center
 - other approaches, including Thursday open house talks
- 2) Build our community
 - welcome, orient and involve newcomers more effectively
 - offer sitting practice and teachings in other locations
 - provide support for "going beyond bias," especially for those engaging with newcomers
- 3) Strengthen our core infrastructure
 - develop a leadership/strategic planning approach
 - adopt a working group/committee to support center operations

The Council has also encouraged development of a series of retreats for members that will strengthen our practice and leadership skills as individuals, as well as nourishing our community. I hope everyone will participate as much as they can!



Acharya Richard John by Sallamah Aliah

When I think about Acharya Richard John, many things come to mind, but my pithy experience of him is one of warmth and wisdom; he opens a door for me to connect with my practice. As I sat preparing for my discussion with Acharya John, these words came to mind: exertion and devotion. After speaking with him, I knew why.

Acharya Richard John first encountered the dharma in the early 1970s when he was living in California. Ever since high school, he had felt desperate to find a genuine path, and he therefore explored many teachers and traditions, including Hinduism, Allen Watts, Zen, Erhard Seminars Training, and Ram Das. He became very frustrated because nothing clicked, and he thought there must be something wrong with him. One day in 1974 - a day to change the rest of his life - a radio station announced a Santa Cruz bookstore was selling *Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism*. He read it - for a year.

It became clear that Chögyam Trungpa was his teacher, and Richard John had to connect with him. He attended a Dathün at Padma Jong, a land center in Mendocino County. "I had no idea what a Dathün was and I was terrified to find out that we were going to sit all day. I thought we were going to do more spiritual stuff," said John. This 1975 Dathün was known as the "Naked Dathün." There was no work during work periods, resulting in much skinny-dipping in the beautiful waters. Not a word was spoken...a practice of Functional Silence.

Richard John then traveled to Boulder to attend Naropa University. He had a talent for woodworking and the Vidyadhara had seen his work. The Vidyadhara took whatever talent or neurosis anyone had and he used it to create the whole Mandala. In 1976, one night after an evening talk, the Vidyadhara asked Richard John to come the next day to the office and begin work. He started working full time on helping create the shrine room and was one of the coordinators of the project for his Holiness the Karmapa. Relieved once the shrine room reached completion, next came the Regent's request for him to decorate the shrine room at Karme Chöling. Five hun-

dred pieces of gold leaf casting later, Karme Chöling's shrine room was manifest.

After three years at Karme Chöling, Richard John asked the Vidyadhara if he thought it was good idea to spend a year at RMDC. The Vidyadhara was always very gentle and he told him that if he himself thought it was a good idea, it would be fine for him to do it. After that year, Richard John thought it was time to go back to the "real world" to create a career for himself, an idea he found painful and depressing, as it seemed to him moving backwards. About 1981, two good things occurred: he had a year-long Kasung shift with the Vidyadhara and his devotion to his teacher manifested. "I consider that the highlight of my life. I really consider that the blessing of my life, the opportunity to be close to him in that way." At the same time, he became very involved in Shambhala Training. He and his wife Angela became the D.C. Resident Directors for five years.

In 1987, after the Vidyadhara died, they moved to Nova Scotia, knowing it was the Vidyadhara's aspiration for his senior students. Five hundred people had already emigrated during the 1980s. The Center in Halifax was really created around the Shambhala Principles. Halifax had tradition, an openness, tolerance and small-town charm. Nova Scotia had less of an addiction to materialism compared to other parts of the world; the Vidyadhara could see a Shambhala Society forming there.

In comparing Chicago to other centers, Acharya John felt that centers of similar size share many similarities such as Berkeley, Boston, and Atlanta. He felt the Chicago Center is physically solid and in a magnificent location. The key improvement is building a larger shrine room, which, like water, will fill where allowed to go.

Chicago is a long-standing, mature center with tremendous strength and diverse members. A mark of the Chicago Center's health is our wide base of younger members. Diversity is an important challenge for all urban centers, requiring different outreach methods. For example, the Baltimore center has a very diverse sangha, which resulted from having people from a particular demographic engage in outreach to their demographic. Chicago can achieve this by empowering people to conduct this outreach.

On how best to grow our community, the Acharya feels many obstacles dissolve when people go deeper into their own practice. There is a danger for senior members to lose sight of personal responsibility for their own paths. Individual practice is key; maintaining an attitude of exertion and openness is necessary to keep growing on the path rather than languishing on a plateau.

On the Sakyong, Acharya John said, "My root guru is the Vidyadhara and there is no doubt in my mind my devotion to him extends to the Sakyong. I see my loyalty to the Sakyong as my direct loyalty to the Vidyadhara."

Listening Committee Update



In May 2006, a small group called the Listening Committee ("LC") began to meet charged with reviewing progress in meeting space needs of the Shambhala Community in Chicago, and of finding ways to continue to move this process forward. It became clear that previous community meetings (2002-2004) had settled on priorities, including a much larger shrine room, a Vajrayana shrine room, physical accessibility for the building, and other needs for more space for classes and other activities. What remained less clear was how to accomplish these priorities. Feng Shui master Eva Wong had suggested that we remain in our present building, first uplifting the space, building a temporary Vajrayana shrine room, and finally major construction to create the large shrine room, make the third floor space usable, add physical accessibility, and other features.

While the uplifting process, led by Jennifer O'Hara in the building, and by Gina Caruso in the yard, has beautified our space and received much appreciation, consensus for renovating our present building has not been achieved. Other options have also been explored, including: (1) selling this building and moving to another location; (2) tearing down the present building and constructing a new building on this site; or (3) working with a developer to purchase the land south of our property and undertake a multi-use project to include the space we need, together with other spaces (residential, professional offices, retreat centers, etc).

In order to move forward, the LC decided we needed to better understand the significance of members' connections with the Center, what they are willing to contribute, and how they envision the Center in the future. Over the summer of 2006, the LC drafted and refined interview questions, and in the fall began to conduct interviews. Thirty interviews were conducted, which were transcribed and entered into a qualitative database so that answers could be compiled. A preliminary report was presented on Shambhala Day, February 18, 2007 during a community meeting, and additional comments were solicited. The final report is currently being compiled. It covers such topics as people's interests in diversity issues, highlights of their experiences at the Center both positive and negative, practice and membership issues, participation in Center activities, and how people might want to be involved in offering support. In addition, views on the building choices and how members see Shambhala in Chicago were solicited.

What we learned from these interviews is being incorporated into the planning for a more inclusive mutual listening process for our community. We need to envision how the enhancement of our space fits into a broader context of strengthening our sangha - stay tuned!

Cheerful Shambhala Day! by Carrie Dohe



As a newcomer to Shambhala, I attended Shambhala Day to broaden my understanding of this lineage beyond shamatha meditation practice. Lingered stereotypes of Buddhism's robed and shaved monks sitting silently dissolved during a day filled with moments alternately hilarious and profound.

The day started with an early morning Kyudo demonstration. While I enjoyed the elegance of tightly choreographed contemplative archery movements, the instructor stunned me. Unlike her students, each firing a single arrow, the instructor had two arrows in hand. As she prepared to shoot the second arrow, I thought she might fire it on the opposite side of the first one. When the arrow landed cleanly alongside the first, causing the it to shiver, my heart leapt at the thrill. Andrew, another new member also felt the thrill saying "I almost shed a tear!"

The crisp, structured morning, which included my first experience of a lasung, or juniper fire offering, was followed by relaxed fun. We gathered in the main shrine room for worldwide Shambhala Centers roll call. Alice, the Chicago Center Director, led our roll call yell rehearsal only to have our Center skipped- hey, wait! What about Chicago? Well, a little humility and humor is always good for one's spiritual practice, right? The emcee in Halifax poked fun in a respectful, spirited way at President Reoch and the Sakyong! The Sakyong's and President Reoch's heartfelt addresses arrived from a monastery in India. President Reoch described an ancient sculpture he'd seen on his pilgrimage in India depicting King Ashoka submitting his sword to the Buddha - a poignant and timely beacon of peace from the deep past illuminating these dark days of war.

Khenpo Gawang then gave a simple and eloquent talk for the new year, the pith of which said: *if you put yourself first, you help only one person; if you put others first, you help many more.* The Khenpo distributed protective chords and calligraphy he made, saying "Tashi Delek;" and "Cheerful Shambhala Day!" My favorite was the one for his cook and friend, Marvin. After a long day of imparting dharma wisdom, the Khenpo and Marvin visited local bars to unwind and play pool. Marvin exclaimed "Lucky dog!" for the Khenpo's shots, which is what is captured in the calligraphy.

That evening, the Shambhala Ball featured a lovely demonstration of Tibetan folk dance by Becky and Hannah, as well as Andrew's cool jazz performance. What really grabbed me, was Ray's hilarious satire of a sutra, which was deliciously blasphemous to this one-time evangelical Christian. After a full day of the wisest of insights interwoven with the wackiest of humor, I became convinced that, for me at any rate, the Buddhist path is indeed the right one to follow.

New Members of Shambhala

Sangha members warmly welcomed the following new members on Shambhala Day. To participate on the Membership Committee, contact Beth Lynch at bethlynch@northwestern.edu.

Michael Alexander
Michele Brignoni
Christine Callahan
David Carno
Carla Carpenter
Rebecca Crall
Carrie Dohe
Paula Butler
Jessica Edgerton
John Farmer
Fran Hammon
James Huff

Robert Kempner
Geoffrey Lantz
Andrew Lautenbach
Kathleen Maltese
Betty Newman
Joshua Polasky
Anna Poplawska
Paul Romejko
Rachel Urquhart
Patricia VanBuskirk
Allen Walker



Great Eastern Sun
Berkeley Shambhala Center

The Bodhisattva and Refuge Vow Ceremonies

by Ann Tyndall

Congratulations to those who took vows with Acharya Richard John on March 8! Those taking Bodhisattva Vows were: Sallamah Aliah, Lori Douglas, Miriam Hall (from the Shambhala Center in Madison), Ori-Ya Ran and Keith Spielfogel. Those taking Refuge Vows were: Michele Brignoni, Rebecca Crall, Carrie Dohe, Sonja Godlewski, James Huff, Geoffrey Lantz, Andrew Lautenbach, Elaine Martin, Talakai Na'Dane, Gretchen Neve, Vengateswaran (Venn) Ravichandran, Paul Romejko, Karla Shelton, Robert Wallace and Nancy Wallace.

Many people worked hard to make it an inspiring occasion. Thanks to John Appel for scheduling, to Marita McLaughlin for doing the English calligraphy and to Marvin Robinson, Nan Brooks and Dana Balukas for a glorious reception. Thanks to Janet Hasz and Jennifer O'Hara for working with the bodhisattvas and Charles Kuehner for working with the refugees. Thanks to Donna Mandel for serving, to David Schreier for taking photographs and to Michael Duerr for doing the sound and the ikebana. Special thanks go to Barbara Wolkowitz who coordinated Acharya Richard John's entire visit and who worked tirelessly behind the scenes. Special thanks go also to Alice Dan, our Director. Finally, we would like to express deep gratitude to Acharya Richard John for his joyful and inspiring presence and for helping each aspirant to progress along the path.

Photos by David Schreier



Sakyong Returns for Chicago Marathon Marathon Training Group to Start



In October 2006, the Sakyong participated in the Chicago Marathon to raise funds for shedra (school) construction at Surmang Dutsi Til in Tibet. The Chicago sangha coordinated an entire weekend of events including a reception for the Sakyong and his wife, Khandro Tseyang, at the Chicago Athletic Club. Despite cold winds and damp conditions, the Sakyong raised his windhorse and completed the marathon in an impressive 3:05:11, setting a personal record, which he aspires to break this October. Several Shambhalian ran the race, from the Sakyong's Colorado team and the local sangha:

Mipham J. Mukpo	Time: 3:05:11
Jon Pratt	Time: 3:05:12
Misty Cech	Time: 3:09:35
Eric Cech	Time: 3:09:35
Mark T. Whaley	Time: 3:18:50
Gina M. Caruso	Time: 4:41:19
Zane Edwards	Time: 4:49:17
John Jacobsen	Time: 5:06:47
Michael Duerr	Time: 6:11:08

Financing the Sakyong's visit to Chicago with Khandro Tseyang required an unknown and untried combination of resources from the Sakyong's personal account, the Konchok Foundation and the Shambhala Center of Chicago. Anne Fraser, coordinator of the event, related tirelessly to various key people to hammer out budgets and clarify promises of support. In the end, gifts for the Kalapa Court Fundraiser Reception totaled \$15,000, and the Konchok Foundation reported success in meeting the national goal of \$50,000 for the roofs of Surmang. Key support came from the Minneapolis and Milwaukee Centers. Many members gave generously of their time and resources and displayed love, devotion and loyalty to the Shambhala lineage headed by the Sakyong. If you would like to contribute to the completion of Surmang school or would like more information, please visit the Konchok Foundation website at www.konchok.org or send an email to GinnyLipson@comcast.net.

The Chicago Shambhala Center is looking forward to welcoming the Sakyong and Khandro Tseyang once again in Chicago this coming fall. Along with various activities planned, a few sangha members would like to organize a marathon training group. If you are interested in training together for the October 2007 Chicago Marathon to raise funds for Shambhala and to run with the Sakyong (in spirit, at any rate, considering his amazing speed), please contact Carrie Dohe at cbdohe@uchicago.edu.

20th Parinirvana Anniversary of Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche Coincides with Surmang Rebuilding Effort

By Gaye Carlson



The 20th anniversary commemoration of the parinirvana of Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche April 4 this spring coincided with major developments at his home monastery, Surmang Dutsi Til in eastern Tibet. As described in *Born in Tibet*, the Vidyadhara had put great effort into building a shedra (school) at Surmang before he was forced into exile in 1959 and Surmang was destroyed. Now, the first classes of the new shedra are expected to start this fall, conducted in tents.

In addition to providing a permanent seat for Trungpa XII Rinpoche, the shedra will provide spiritual and secular education to an estimated 150-200 students, once it is in full operation. The shedra will be open to women as well as men, lay people as well as monastics, and children as well as adults.

A copy of one of the major terma texts received by Trungpa Rinpoche during his time in Tibet was recently recovered by his nephew Karma Senge Rinpoche and passed on to Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche, and it has just been translated into English for the first time by the Nalanda Translation Committee. Karma Senge Rinpoche is expected to offer transmissions of the sadhana this spring.

The construction focus has shifted to the huge amount of finishing work needed to prepare the building complex for occupancy, including the creation of murals, statues and other artwork to decorate the main shrine room. The Konchok Foundation, which funds the shedra project at Surmang Dutsi Til, has also agreed to assist with building a shedra at Wayen in the Golok region of Tibet. Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche made a strong connection with Wayen, which is closely associated with the previous Mipham Rinpoche as well as with King Gesar.

If you are interested in supporting the spring building campaign, you may do so by sending a check payable to the Konchok Foundation to: Ginny Lipson, Shambhala Center, 1345 Spruce St., Boulder, CO 80302. If you would like more information, please visit www.konchok.org.

Welcome to David Stone New Co-Director for Teaching

On March 11, David Stone took the Oath of Office as Co-Director for Teaching at the Chicago Shambhala Center. The position of Co-Director for Teaching is intended to hold the vision of practice and study for the Center.

Responsibilities include providing advice to the Center Director, Coordinators of Practice and Buddhist Study, and Shambhala Training Resident Directors; cultivating teachers, meditation instructors and Shambhala guides; and presenting dharma teachings. As an experienced senior student and teacher, the Co-Director for Teaching has a profound understanding of the Shambhala Buddhist view, is devoted to the teachings and lineage, and is widely respected in the Shambhala mandala.

David Stone has been a student of the Vidyadhara, Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche, since 1974. He attended Vajradhatu Seminary in 1978 and completed the post-seminary Ngedon School of Higher Learning. He was a member and then Co-Director of the Mudra Theater Group in Boulder from 1975 through 1984, and he has continued to practice and teach Mudra Space Awareness in North America and Europe. He is a student of Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche, and also studies with Venerable Khandro Rinpoche.

David has served as a shamatha, ngondro and sadhana meditation instructor for many years, has taught at Vajradhatu Seminaries and served in the Practice and Study Department at Shambhala Mountain Center. His mandala service has also included membership in the Dorje Kasung and Kalapa Court Household Staff.

David was Resident Director of Shambhala Training in Boulder from 1987 to 1990, and from 1992 to 1995, he attended acupuncture school in Florida and England. David moved to Chicago from Santa Fe in 2003 and now practices five element acupuncture in Evanston.

We are excited to have David join the leadership group in the Midwest, and we look forward to his contributions to our practice, study, and connections with the Shambhala Buddhist Lineages.

Dear Sangha and Friends,

I'm honored and humbled to take this position as Center Co-Director for Teaching. There is a lot to say about this job and there isn't enough room here to do it properly. While there is an official job description, all signs indicate that much is yet to be discovered about the reality of the situation, as usual. Along those lines, here is what I've been thinking about..

While we do have differentiated responsibilities, I would like to join and support Alice in all she's doing, particularly her ongoing good efforts to increase communication in the community. Wherever we're going, in a real sense we're going together and everyone - new, old or in-between - has a voice to be heard.

Speaking of "where we're going," refers to vision. There are different ways of talking about vision, of course. In this case, I see a significant part of this role as holding the vision of who we fundamentally are: practitioners in the Shambhala, Kagyü and Nyingma lineages. There is a lot of meaning enfolded in those words and that meaning is constantly unfolding. The meaning is what gives context to our vision and the basic direction to our movement as a community.

Another concern of this office is harmony in the sangha. Communication is a good foundation for harmony. And especially so is practice. That is the one thing we have in common; it is what brings us together no matter what else we're currently engaging on our path. Meditation practice gives us the tools and the "space" to understand our experience from a dharmic perspective, to see through the solidity of our own confusion, projections and bias to ineffable basic goodness. This kind of sharpness or clarity is called prajna, "discriminating awareness" or "best knowledge." This office will be involved in further development of our practice and teaching situations, where prajna is cultivated by both teachers and students.

In our lineage we talk metaphorically about the soft spot. It's like a bruise or even an open wound, very sensitive, uncovered. It is where we are accessible to our world, where we're not crusted over, hardened. Because of the soft spot, we can appreciate our world and be touched by it and by another person. Among other things, it undermines the tendency to gloss over our experience with habitual patterns. Because our contact with the world is so exquisitely direct, it helps keep us honest. We need this.

Well, these are primary among the things I want to look after. Most immediately, please tune into the commemoration of Chögyam Trungpa's Parinirvana, 20 years ago on April 4. Also, watch for new energy to show up on Thursday nights.

Yours in the Vision of the Great Eastern Sun,
David Stone
Co-Director for Teaching
Shambhala Meditation Center of Chicago

Social Action and Prison Volunteer Training

"Being in a Federal [prison] facility is not much different than being in samsara. We are imprisoned within the walls and units of samsara from the Buddhist point of view. If we really look at our mind, there is not much of a difference. How much more freedom do we have than people in federal facilities? Not much. We think we do have much more freedom, but freedom is very conceptual, isn't it? We think: "We are free, and they are not free."

- Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche, addressing prison volunteers, October 1999, as quoted in Milarepa Journal (Spring, 2000).



On Friday, February 2, visiting teacher Bill Karelis presented the "Mahayana View of Social Action" and continued Saturday with a full day of training, giving participants an opportunity to discover their potential commitment to prison volunteer work. Mr. Karelis is the executive director of the Shambhala Prison Community, a project he founded in 1996 to propagate education in the prison environment (here and in other countries), especially the insights of meditation. The program attracted sixteen participants, several from other Midwest Shambhala centers and other Buddhist traditions in Chicago.

Participants got a rich taste of the work through role-playing exercises, meditation, discussions, an explanation of the experientially evolved project guidelines, creation of a self-reflective written journal, and group interviews. We also faced the challenging experience of examining and crystallizing our own motivation. This kind of activity is really an extended form of our Buddhist meditation practice: we can have a fresh and honest experience of ourselves. Mr. Karelis emphasized that this is neither entertainment nor a form of therapy. It is not a way to "fix" our problems or those of others (a notion that suggests there is something "wrong"). Thus, we do not characterize people or their situation in terms of our own concepts. (It is very possible to have good intentions but a wrong view and thus do harm.) We develop compassion - a genuine desire or aspiration to help others because we are inspired to let the world in and feel their pain and suffering.

Mr. Karelis (with the assistance of Marita McLaughlin throughout the program) pointed out that this is a very sincere, long-term-oriented project: we almost certainly will not see the fruition of our efforts. We apply the dharma every moment. We make ourselves more available. The idea is to place trust in our instinct. We just do it! This is a state of spontaneous helpfulness and not a deliberate or contrived helpfulness. Thus, we learn how not to take in the neurosis of those we are trying to help as well as how not to offer our neurosis to them. The long-term result of this kind of work may be more related to how we carry out our mission rather than to the mission itself. There is great joy that underlies this kind of engagement: there is no self-consciousness and no expectation of reward.

Patricia Donegan on Haiku



Patricia Donegan gave a talk and workshop entitled "The Way of Haiku: Pausing for Peace," on March 16 and 17, 2006. She introduced haiku as a way of seeing and a way of being in the world, to slow down, take a deep breath, relax and thus in turn see clearly what is here this very moment and simply appreciate that, whether recording it on paper or not. She explained that it is pausing and remembering our innate open mind of "sky-mind" that we can tune into anytime, anywhere. Through this simple awareness practice of pausing, we can feel more peaceful within ourselves and thus in turn plant small seeds of peace around us.

Patricia Donegan is the author of *Without Warning* and *Hot Haiku*. For a decade she taught east-west poetry at Naropa University in the early years under Allen Ginsberg and Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche. After studying with Japanese haiku master Seishi Yamaguchi, she co-authored *Chiyo-ni Woman Haiku Master* with Yoshie Ishibashi. Her most recent book on how to write haiku is *Haiku: Asian Arts for Creative Kids*. For the last ten years she taught creative writing at a university in Tokyo and is the poetry editor for the *Kyoto Journal*.

Shambhala Center Children's Program Contemplative Arts Spring Series



Parents frequently wonder how to introduce children to mindful living. Home life often needs support from the world at large, which is the purpose of the Children's Program Spring 2007 Contemplative Arts Series at the Shambhala Center of Chicago.

Families, parents and children are invited to join the community for sitting and walking meditation from 10:15 to 10:30 a.m. on Sundays through May 20. At 10:30, the children participating in the morning's class gather in the lower level of the Center, while parents continue their own practice. The programs conclude at noon. The schedule of classes includes ikebana contemplative flower arrangement with Jennifer O'Hara (in session); a mini-workshop on haiku with Patricia Donegan on April 22; and miksang contemplative photography with David Schreier on May 6, 13, and 20.

For more information, please contact Donna Mandel at 708/383-2756 or via email at donnamandel@comcast.net, or Patricia Pellatier at 773/465-5267 or via email at ppelle@artic.edu.

Entering the Haunted House in the Disneyland of our Minds

Reflections on teachings of Ari Goldfield

by Ellen Schweri



In November 2006, in his introduction to the teachings from Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamts'o's *Moon of Wisdom* text, Ari Goldfield treated participants to a way of looking at how bodhisattvas work with the six paramitas (or transcendent virtues), a basic practice of the Mahayana path. Upon entering the path of seeing, bodhisattvas begin the journey of the ten bhumis. Bhumi is a Sanskrit word for ground or beautiful garden. The bodhisattva goes from one to the next, each ground being the mind of the bodhisattva itself.

The first six bhumis correspond to the six paramitas. Ari likened the practice of these to visiting the haunted house at Disneyland. There, he said, we pay \$50 and stand in line a long time to experience vicarious horror and to safely satiate our curiosity about ghosts, demons and gore. Why? Because we know it's not real. However, because we think the ghosts and demons of our thoughts are real, we resist entering the haunted house of our minds and looking directly at them. Instead of curiosity we have fear and loathing. Suffering prevails and perfect wisdom or prajnaparamita continually eludes us.

He then took us on a journey through the paramitas, looking at how conventional mind operates in contrast to bodhisattva mind.

Any misrepresentation of these profound teachings is due solely to this writer's confused mind. They are offered in the sincere wish to encourage others to examine and benefit from them.

Generosity

Without wisdom, we struggle with stinginess and selectivity because we believe the gift, giver and recipient are real.

With wisdom, we see every gift as limitless in value, every giver limitless as space, and every situation or recipient workable or capable of transformation.

Ethics

Without wisdom, we struggle with guilt and shame because we believe any harm we cause is solid and irremediable.

With wisdom, we know that actions have consequences, sometimes harmful to self and others, but we learn from those mistakes. We continue the grand experiment of finding ways to bring about causes and conditions that have a better result. To illustrate the enlightened attitude toward this process of trial and error, Ari quoted His Holiness, the Sixteenth Karmapa: "Ha, ha, ha, that didn't work!"

Patience

Without wisdom, we are at constant war with fear and anger, either repressing them in the belief that they will go away, or acting out in ways that bring more harm to self and others. With wisdom, we focus directly on anger itself, finding that its true nature is prajnaparamita - mirror-like wisdom. Clarity arises and we can see situations for what they really are. We can then act with precision, which brings about better results for everyone.

Joyous Diligence or Effort

Without wisdom, exertion is like riding a bike uphill. We hit the wall of our own tiredness and fight with that.

With wisdom, we see that tiredness does not really exist from its own side or the body. It is a thought in the mind, a label. Ari characterized such thoughts as waves of luminosity coming into existence, like hitting your head on a pile of tofu.

Concentration or One-pointed Meditation

Without wisdom, concentration is almost non-existent as we struggle continuously with distraction.

With wisdom, we see no wall or separation between practice and our daily lives. Ari repeatedly quoted Milarepa on this: "No sessions, no breaks." We can always meditate because we always have our minds.

Ari did not speak directly about the sixth bhumi except by implication in his discussion of the first five and by referencing the subject of the text throughout his talk.

Knowledge

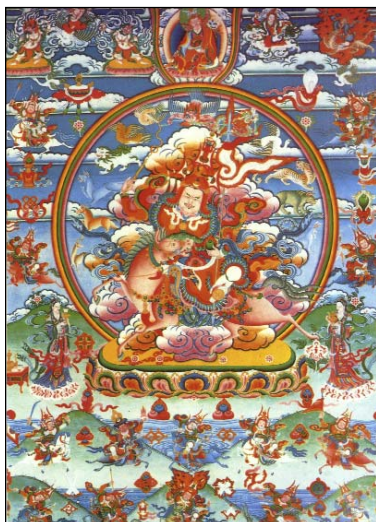
Without perfect wisdom or prajnaparamita we may, after completing the first five bhumis, still have remnants of clinging and occasionally do battle with the "husks" of klesha activity.

With perfect wisdom, knowledge is transcendental, indescribable, beyond concept. The Buddha gave us the perfect words in the Heart Sutra:

Om Gate Gate Paragate Parasamgate Bodhi Svaha

(Translated by Acharya Judith Simmer Brown as, "Gone. Gone. Completely gone. Most completely gone. Awake. Wow!" Berkeley, June 2005.)

Gesar and the Ancestral Sovereigns



In various chants and other contexts one encounters references to Gesar, Ashoka, Prince Shotoku and the Yung-Lo Emperor, collectively referred to as the Ancestral Sovereigns. The Vidhyadhara taught that these rulers embodied the principles of the Shambhala Lineage. Who were they and what can we learn from their lives? Three of them - Ashoka, Shotoku and Yung-Lo - are historical figures with varying amounts of information

available to us. The fourth, Gesar, like King Arthur, is of unknown historical provenance, but like Arthur, is the center of a rich literary tradition, one strongly associated with the Mukpo and Ripa families.

A one-time or multi-session discussion group, perhaps held café-style Saturday mornings, could be established to examine resources and inspiration these figures offer to us in the Shambhala Lineage. Recommended reading includes the two biographies of Gesar easily available in the bookstore, as well as *The Way To Shambhala* by Edwin Bernbaum. Contact Charles Kuehner at 773-274-5117 with your interest.

One Breath at a Time in Hyde Park

If you are in a 12-step support group, have you wondered how to integrate your Buddhist practice with the Twelve Steps? A new group will be forming shortly in Hyde Park to discuss this.

We are planning an 12-step meeting, which will involve reading from a basic Buddhist text, as well as the book *One Breath at a Time* by Kevin Griffin; meditation; and discussion on the texts.



If interested, please contact Carrie Dohe at cbdohe@uchicago.edu or 773-620-0075.

Entering the Desung Path

A Dorje Kasung Education Program

April 27 - 29, 2007 at Windhorse Retreat Center



Entering the Desung Path is a weekend of introduction to the practice of desungship and takes the form of an interactive, experiential training program. Desung practice is an integral aspect of all kasung activity, as well as a distinct and unique path. The literal meaning of desung is "protector of bliss or harmony". The desung path

involves working with our own minds as we attempt to be helpful to others who are encountering significant physical, emotional, social or spiritual distress. On the desung path, all situations are viewed as workable and distress is recognized as a powerful opportunity to experience basic goodness.

The program will be facilitated by Dapon M, Dennis Southward and Khenchen BettySue Dallas, Regional Desung Officer. Kasung from all regions who have demonstrated a commitment to the kasung path and have an interest in deepening their personal skills in helping others are welcomed to participate. All Desung and Dorje Kasung in leadership positions are particularly encouraged to attend.

Program Cost: \$150.00 includes room & board
Program Location: Windhorse Retreat Center, Plymouth, WI
Blessed by the Makkyi Rabjam Trinley Dradul in 2005, this newest of Shambhala residential centers rests on the rolling moraines of Wisconsin, 1/1/2 hrs. north of Milwaukee, WI.
Check www.midwestretreat.org for maps and driving instructions.

Program Times: Arrival begins Friday, April 27, 2:00pm
First Talk 8:00pm
Departure Sunday, April 29, 3:00pm

For information and registration contact Khenchen Marita McLaughlin, Thunder Regimental Desung, at: marita316@sbcglobal.net



The Financial Health of the Center

by Ellen Schweri

Through December 2006, the Center remains financially healthy with an income of \$ 104,292 and expenses of \$ 102,916.

For the curious, some broad comments about our sources of income and objects of expense may be illuminating:

Income...

57.5% member and friend donations

26.5% program revenue

16% other sources (book store sales and contributions from Shambhala Training)

Outflows...

65% operating expenses (mortgage, heat, light, insurance, salaries, office supplies, affiliate dues, and building upkeep)

19% books and materials, shrine expenses, community celebrations and community related events

16% program expenses.

Detailed reports are made available at most Council meetings. Anyone interested in receiving a report may contact the treasurer, Ellen Schweri, at eschweri@comcast.net.

If I Had a Million Bucks...



The following Wish List of the Shambhala Center includes needed items or assistance. For financial assistance, contact Ellen Schwerie at eschweri@comcast.net. For logistical/volunteer help, please contact Michael Duerr at admin@chicagoshambhala.org or 773-743-8147. Thanks a million!

1. New and used cushions and seiza benches, especially in light of our expansion via satellite groups, the Vajrayana shrine room, and the advancing age of some of our cushions.
2. A digital projector for miksang.
3. A flat-panel large screen tv.
4. A laptop computer for the front desk, for use in registration, etc.
5. A copy of Quark Express for the office PC.
6. A new tea and coffee station in the common area that coordinates with the existing furniture.
7. A library volunteer.
8. A part-time AV volunteer, to record, clean up, produce and duplicate audio- and video-taped recordings from programs at the Center.
9. Volunteers to help landscape the yard around the Center.

Upcoming Events

For more information, please email admin@chicagoshambhala.org or call us at 773-743-8147.

Learn To Meditate Workshop

Saturday, April 21, 8:45 Registration 9am - 4pm Program

"With an untrained mind, we live most days at the mercy of our moods. There is, however, a different approach to our lives. We can wake up to our enlightened qualities of unconditional love and compassion; uninhibited, total ease with ourselves, and a clear and sharp mind." - Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche



Through the practice of "peaceful abiding" meditation, we train ourselves to recognize and release distracting thoughts and emotions, allowing the mind to regain its inherent stability, clarity, and strength. Ideal for beginners as well as students who want to work on stabilizing their meditation, this one-day program gives you the essential techniques and reasons for meditation practice in everyday life.

Cost: \$40 includes lunch. Further discounts are available based on financial need.

The Tibetan Buddhist Path



Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche taught these seminars during the inaugural session at Naropa Institute in 1974; more than 1000 attended! This series of video talks contains much unique material and provides an excellent overview of the scope and profundity of Rinpoche's teachings.

The series will be offered Thursday evenings at 7pm for 14 weeks, from April 26th through July 26th. Each will include meditation practice, viewing the DVD and group discussion. Suggested donation: \$5/session

Ongoing Events

For more information, please see the descriptions on-line at www.chicagoshambhala.org.

Open Meditation Practice: Sundays, drop in, 9 am - 12 pm

Open Shambhala Practice: Tuesdays, 7-9 pm

Open Buddhist Practice: Thursdays, 7-9 pm

GLBT/Queer Dharma Buddhist Group: Sundays, 7-9 pm

Chicago Supports New North American People of Color Scholarship Fund

During the 2005 Vajrayana Seminary, several North American Shambhala practitioners met to discuss the topic of diversity within Shambhala and to explore ways of supporting people of all races and ethnicities. They concluded that Shambhala would benefit from an organized effort to cultivate the participation of larger numbers of people of color in the Shambhala community who would contribute to Shambhala's vision and culture and hold positions as meditation instructors and teachers.

Over the following year, Mabinti Dennis from Toronto, together with Bill Auerbach of New York and Alice Dan of Chicago, developed the North American People of Color Scholarship Fund. The purpose of NAPOCSF is to support the Shambhala mandala's intentions related to diversity by making available financial assistance to people of color on the Shambhala Buddhist path who aspire to attend programs that will enable them to contribute more fully to Shambhala society and to be of benefit to people who share their backgrounds. As we know from the recent excellent report of the Diversity Working Group, this proposal addresses one particular area of need among many areas identified. We trust that our effort and experience will be inspiring for additional efforts worldwide.

As part of its intention to create enlightened society, Shambhala seeks to foster a society that is open, inclusive, and welcoming of diversity. Shambhala's racial and ethnic diversity affects our ability to relate to people of various backgrounds who enter our centers and therefore our ability to benefit people of all backgrounds in our increasingly multicultural communities.

Who may apply for a NAPOCSF scholarship?

An individual may apply for a NAPOCSF scholarship who: (a) is a member of the Shambhala Buddhist community; (b) is a person of color residing in North America (Canada, Mexico, or the United States); (c) has applied to one of the following programs; and (d) needs financial aid in order to attend one of the following programs.

Eligible programs:

- Dathün
- Warrior Assembly
- Sutrayana Seminary
- Vajrayana Seminary
- Shambhala Guide Training
- Meditation Instructor Training
- Shambhala Assistant Director Training

The management and accountability of NAPOCSF funds will be the responsibility of the Chicago Shambhala Center. The Center will be financially responsible for accounting and record keeping, and will take all legal responsibility for the funds. All financial statements of the account will be made available to the Board of Directors on a yearly basis and NAPOCSF fund

performance will be reported annually to the Shambhala community. Chicago members Marvin Robinson and Blessie Selvig serve on the board of this innovative project, while Alice Dan is an advisor, and Michael Duerr will maintain the accounts. Complete information about the NAPOCSF is available at www.shambhala.org.

How to contribute to the NAPOCSF

Shambhalians and others wishing to contribute to the NAPOCSF will be able to do so as described below. All contributions will be held in trust and will be distributed as directed by the members of the NAPOCSF Board of Directors.

Contributors requiring a tax receipt in Canada should send a check, money order or voided check for automatic monthly withdrawal to:

Shambhala Office of Finance and Development
1084 Tower Road
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3H 2Y5

Contributors requiring a tax receipt in the United States should send a check, money order or a voided check for automatic monthly withdrawal to:

Shambhala Meditation Center of Chicago
7331 N. Sheridan Road
Chicago, IL 60637

Contributors from other countries may send a check or money order to either the Canadian or U.S. office noted above.

Shambhala Care Council Established



The Shambhala Care Council was established to support the health and well-being of the Shambhala community and its members. We may help organize the community with specific issues, or assist in finding the needed support for individuals with concerns such as safety, illness, substance abuse, and mental health.

We respect the inherent sanity of all situations, and encourage Shambhala practices as a way to work through challenging times.

Community members are invited to express concerns to the members of the Shambhala Care Council: Marita McLaughlin, Jan Jercinovic, Jill Spielfogel, and Jon Feller.

Eva Wong to Teach Qigong in Chicago



Summer 2005, Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche announced the formation of the Institute of the Internal Arts, intended to offer training in the internal arts of India, China, Tibet and Japan. In this context, Eva Wong offered the Sakyong her qigong lineages and in turn the Sakyong asked her to teach traditional qigong in Shambhala Centers. Ms. Wong is the nineteenth-generation carrier of the lineage of Daoist sage Chen Xiyi, who is recognized as the "father of qigong." She is also a third-generation lineage descendant in the Yiquan School.

What is qigong (chee-kung)? The word means "(vital life force) energy skill (or) cultivation." A second-century scholar in China named Fu Yi wrote, "Qigong is an art that pleases the spirit, slows the aging process, and prolongs life." In other words, it has applications toward health, longevity, martial power, and spiritual enlightenment. The practice is over 2,000 years old.

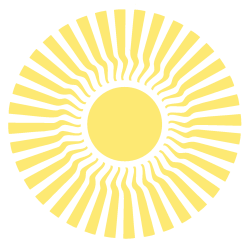
Qigong arises from techniques produced by Laozi, the founder of Daoism. There are also connections with Buddhism in the history and practice of qigong. In particular, Bodhidharma, the founder of Zen Buddhism, is said to have brought breathwork (pranayama) from India to China's martial and energy cultivation (qigong) exercises. Also, it has been said that the practices and their results have commonality with the Tibetan tradition of the Six Dharmas of Naropa.

During the weekend of June 2 and 3, Ms. Wong will present the first two of nine levels in her training. Levels 1 and 2 focus on outer and inner qigong. Outer qigong is concerned with the musculo-skeletal system: tendon changing, marrow washing, self-massage and calisthenics; inner qigong with nourishing the internal organs and cultivating internal energy (qi).

There are no prerequisites for Level I, which is a stand-alone class; however, you must come to both days. Later programs require Level II. The hours for both days are 9:00am sharp to 5:30pm. Click on 'Events' at www.chicagoshambhala.org for information and to register. We are extremely pleased to present this program and look forward to a level of interest and involvement that will enable us to continue through all nine segments here in Chicagoland. We hope to see you there.

Shambhala
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