



# Pema Mandala

Vol. 5

Teaching Schedule of  
 Ven. Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche  
 and  
 Ven. Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal Rinpoche

**NEW YORK**

September 6 - 7 New York City  
 BUDDHA SHAKYAMUNI  
 EMPOWERMENT & TEACHINGS

October 11 - 13 Padma Samye Ling  
 NYUNGNE RETREAT/FASTING PRACTICE  
 WITH AVALOKITESHVARA

January 1,3,4 New York City  
 VAJRAKILAYA & VAJRASATTVA  
 FIRE PUJA

February 14 - 15 New York City  
 LONGCHENPA INITIATION  
 & TEACHING

Feb. 28 - March 1 Padma Samye Ling  
 LOSAR: TIBETAN NEW YEAR RETREAT  
 AMITABHA/AMITAYU PRACTICE

**OTHER PADMASAMBHAVA BUDDHIST CENTERS**

- Sept. 17 - 22 Colorado
- Sept. 23 - 25 San Francisco
- Sept. 26 - 30 Oregon
- Oct. 17 - 19 Tennessee
- Oct. 20 - 21 Orlando
- Oct. 22 - 29 West Palm Beach
- Oct. 30 - Nov. 2 Puerto Rico
- Dec. 13 - 14 Chicago
- Jan. 17 - 24 West Palm Beach, Florida  
 DZOGCHEN RETREAT
- March 16 - 22 Puerto Rico
- March 23 - 31 Florida

For more information on these programs please  
 call or write to us at:

Padmasambhava Buddhist Center  
 Tibetan Nyingma Buddhist Meditation  
 & Study Center  
 P.O. Box 1533, Old Chelsea Station  
 New York, NY 10011  
 212/683.4958



## Padmasambhava and the Ngondro

*This teaching is continued from our last issue of Pema Mandala, in which Khenchen presented a framework for the Vajrayana tradition of Tibetan Buddhist meditation practices. The following brief discussion on the life of Padmasambhava and the Ngondro is excerpted from an interview with Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche and Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal Rinpoche conducted by their student—writer and poet—Michael White, in September, 1992 at PBC in Tennessee.*

MW Did Padmasambhava teach ngondro practice?

KPSR Yes, he gave many teachings about the ngondro.

MW Was he the first to introduce ngondro?

KPSR No, this is really the Buddha's teachings. I'm not saying the Buddha used the title "ngondro," but the Buddha taught that this type of practice was  
*(Interview continued on Page 3)*

## ABOUT PADMASAMBHAVA BUDDHIST CENTER

The Padmasambhava Buddhist Center spreads the teachings of Buddhism according to the Nyingma school lineage of Tibet. The Center was first established in New York in 1989, with the encouragement of His Holiness Dudjom Rinpoche, by the Ven. Khenchen Palden Sherab, Rinpoche and Ven. Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal, Rinpoche. Khenchen Palden Sherab and Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal, known informally as "the *Khenpos*," are the teachers and spiritual leaders of PBC. They also direct the activities of the New York Center, its many branches in the U.S.A., Puerto Rico and Russia, and its retreat center Padma Samye Ling in upstate New York. Their Sarnath Project in India has flourished with a traditional monastic institute and retreat center called Padma Samye Chokhor Ling; another monastic college and retreat center located in Shravasti, India called Padma Samye Jetvan is under construction.

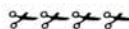
## BECOMING A PART OF PBC

Because the Padmasambhava Buddhist Center is a member supported organization, your contribution is essential to the continuation of its efforts. You are invited to join and become a member of our "pema mandala"—our worldwide dharma family at PBC. We thank many of you who have supported PBC for so long and we appreciate your continued membership. If you have not re-newed your membership with us, please consider making a commitment today; your contribution will really help make a difference.

As a not-for-profit, membership-based organization, we depend on volunteers to help us with a variety of small and large projects. We welcome your volunteer assistance in many of Padmasambhava Buddhist Centers' activities.

Padma Samye Ling (*Inconceivable Lotus Land*) Retreat Center located in Delaware County, New York is modeled after the great Samye Monastery situated in Central Tibet—close to Lhasa, which was a preeminent center of religious practice and teaching, and also a creative source for Tibetan moral development, philosophy, culture and art. Padma Samye Ling (PSL) now has a Sangha House: central lodge with shrine room, kitchen, guest rooms/baths, and an office. Construction is planned for a large formal temple with library, museum, study room, meditation gardens and provision for long-term retreat.

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Pema Mandala #4

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Padma Samye Chokhor Ling Monastic Institute, Sarnath, India |  |

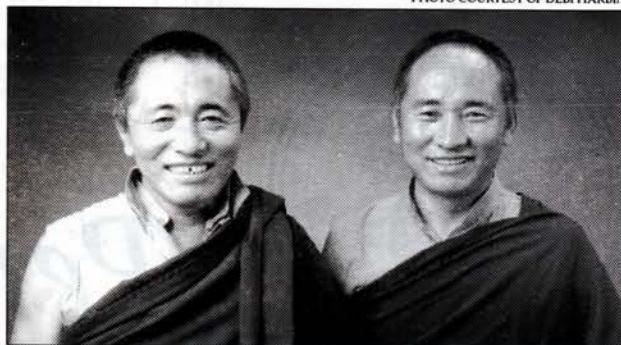
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My total contribution to help support PBC is \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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PHOTO COURTESY OF DEBI HARBIN



Ven. Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche (l)  
Ven. Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal Rinpoche (r)

**Venerable Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche** is one of the most qualified scholars and teachers of the Tibetan Buddhist tradition. He entered Gochen Monastery at the age of six, where he began intensive training in all facets of Tibetan Buddhism. At age 12 he entered Riwoche Monastery, training to become a *khenpo*, or professor of Tibetan philosophy. In 1960 he had to flee to India. There, for over 15 years, he was in charge of the Nyingmapa Department at the Central Institute of Higher Studies in Varanasi, as well as being a founding member of that Institute. Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche has received many honors for his scholarship from His Holiness Dudjom Rinpoche and other Tibetan leaders. He is fully versed in many areas of Buddhist study and is the author of several learned works and Tibetan language books. He is also considered a master of *Dzogchen*, the highest tradition of meditation practice in Tibetan Buddhism.

**Venerable Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal Rinpoche**—born in eastern Tibet—was enthroned as a Nyingmapa Abbot by H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche, supreme head of the Nyingma school of Tibetan Buddhism. He studied extensively Hinayana, Mahayana, Vajrayana, poetry, history, and Tibetan literature. Khenpo is the author of many books on poetry, historical perspectives of the great Nyingmapa masters and translators, as well as Buddhist philosophy and practice which he co-authored with his brother Ven. Khen Rinpoche. As holder of the complete Nyingmapa lineage: kama, terma, and *Dzogchen* teachings, Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal Rinpoche is the co-founder of PBC International whose activities include monastic institutes, Buddhist meditation, research, and study centers.

**The Nyingma School** lineage was established in Tibet in the mid-eighth century by the three great founders of Tibetan Buddhism: Guru Padmasambhava, Khenpo Santarakshita and King Trisrong Deutsen. It encompasses all the nine paths of Buddha Shakyamuni's teachings, from the Theravada to the highest Ati Yoga Yana tantric and *Dzogchen* teachings. The tradition has been passed down for over 1,000 years in an unbroken lineage to the present time. Because the first translations of the Buddhist texts from Sanskrit into Tibetan were made at that time, the Nyingma school is known also as the Ancient (or Early) Translation school.

The aim of Buddhism is the happiness of all sentient beings. This is the goal of our seeking to achieve enlightenment, the realization of our own inherent Buddha nature. Through the profound practices and swift techniques of the Nyingma lineage which the Rinpoches impart to us we can invoke our own inherent Buddha nature in this lifetime; through the practices of the highest tantric teachings, we can dissolve the dualistic illusion of happiness and sorrow into enlightened, egoless awareness.

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**Pema Mandala**  
931 Village Blvd. Suite 905-390  
West Palm Beach, Fl. 33409-1939

May all beings benefit from this auspicious Dharma activity

necessary to lead to enlightenment. Guru Padmasambhava also taught this but it was not called ngondro at that time. Now these teachings are more condensed and are brought together and given the name *ngondro*.

MW Could you talk about the etymology of the word ngondro?

KPSR *Ngon* is the Tibetan word for first and *dro* means go. Different lamas and teachers interpret this in different ways. If you look carefully with a panoramic view then it really means simply...*go first*. This must be done first for you to reach enlightenment; if this goes first then enlightenment will follow. Many people translate it as preliminary practice, because in order to do more serious practices this must be done first. It is really establishing yourself so that you stand firmly.

MW With ngondro practice we begin to learn visualizations. Here in Tennessee you have taught us to start ngondro with Guru Yoga which involves a visualization of Padmasambhava. Next you taught us the visualization of Vajrasattva. So it seems that the Vajrayana techniques involve learning to visualize. How is it that creating a visualized image deepens meditation practice?

KPSR It is true that I generally teach practitioners to begin with practice on Guru Padmasambhava. In the Vajrayana tradition, the practice on Guru Padmasambhava is very important. It is important to establish a connection with the lama or with Guru Padmasambhava because Padmasambhava was the founder of these Vajrayana teachings. This meditation technique brings about an immediate connection to the teacher who exemplifies the state of realization gained by this practice. When you connect with him you have an auspicious arrangement just like the original twenty-five Tibetan students. These students all obtained enlightenment and, with these techniques, you have the same opportunity to reach enlightenment. He was a historical living Buddha and the embodiment of all the Buddhas, so it is very important to have this connection and this assistance in understanding the nature of the mind.

When you practice on Guru Padmasambhava, it includes practice on vipashyana and practice on shamatha, as well as practice on pure perception and the discovery of primordial nature. Therefore it is more advanced and more profound than just shamatha or vipashyana. When you visualize the image of Guru Padmasambhava and continue to concentrate on that image, it is a form of shamatha meditation. To see Guru Padmasambhava's wisdom light—and to see those wisdom lights reflecting in all directions—is the discovery stage of pure perception.

All human beings are caught in samsara but, according to the Vajrayana tradition, by meditating in this way, it is possible to understand the true nature of the universe. This creates the realization that every existing thing is a display of primordial wisdom. This primordial wisdom is an inherent quality in each person. This type of meditation helps reveal this quality. At the end of this meditation you dissolve the image of Padmasambhava and meditate on the emptiness of the true nature state. This aspect of the practice is a form of vipashyana.

MW As we learn more techniques we learn to visualize more and more different images. There seems to be an almost unending array of images that we learn to create in our visualizations. For example, there is Manjushri, Avalokitesvara, Tara, all the great bodhisattvas, the dakas and dakinis, the herukas and the dharmapalas, mamos and on and on. Could you speak about the necessity for all these images.

KPSR It is not really necessary to learn to visualize all of these different images. Practice on any one of these will bring about full understanding. For example, Guru Yoga will be enough to bring full enlightenment. You can use the images that you find most interesting and don't have to practice on all of them.

MW What type of reality should we consider these beings to have? Are they simply mind created or do they have a reality beyond that?

KPSR Both, they are existing Buddhas and they are displays of our wisdom. For example, Manjushri is the wisdom deity, as such Manjushri represents wisdom and consequently enhances our wisdom.

MW When you talk about visualizations you sometimes refer to them as pure perception. We have different kinds of perception; we have our ordinary direct perception, then we have the perception in the dream state and we have these visualized perceptions. What is the difference between pure perception and ordinary perception?

KPSR The difference between pure perception and ordinary perception is clinging and duality. As long as there is clinging

# PBC Summer Retreat

by Cynthia Friend

PHOTOS COURTESY OF RON WAGNER



At the annual Summer Retreat at Padma Samye Ling about 120 members of our sangha gathered from all over the United States and abroad. Many had been studying with the Khenpos for years; others were warmly welcomed newcomers.

On Saturday evening, Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche and Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal Rinpoche began the formal teachings by pointing out that retreat is a most joyful time in our busy lives, a special time to explore deeper meanings. Throughout the following week, each retreatant was richly provided with opportunities for joy and service, ranging from a bouquet of priceless teachings, to the joyful efforts of shared cooking and shared cleaning chores.

The teachings given were of two types. First, following their customary pattern of giving a major Dzogchen teaching at each retreat, the Khenpos gave a detailed commentary on the *Chetsun Nyingthig*; a teaching by Chetsun Senge Wangchuk (11-12th C.) and rediscovered in the 19th century by Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo. Over five days, the Khenpos took us skillfully by stages from the very basic, essential and accessible Seven Mindtrainings, into technical instructions on the *Khordes Rushin* (a preliminary practice of Dzogchen). They continued through each step of the main practice, then concluded with

descriptions of the esoteric *Tregchod* and *Thogal* practices.

This Summer Retreat also saw the beginning of the long-awaited series of teachings and transmissions from the Tsasum Lingpa lineage. The 18th century tertön Tsasum Lingpa was a leading revealer of termas from objects. His extensive teachings were held in many small monasteries in Eastern Tibet, especially in Gochen monastery, the monastery for which the Khenpos' family had hereditary responsibility. In transmitting this cycle of rare, previously untranslated Dzogchen teachings: *Lama'i Thug Drub Dhe Dheg Kun Dus*, called "The Heart Practice of the Lama as Embodiment of all the Buddhas", our teachers are offering a unique and little-known treasure to their Western students. These teachings have such immediacy that they are "like a freshly cooked meal with the fragrance still there," as Khenpo said. Two sections of this cycle were transmitted this year: the general practice of Guru Padmasambhava in Sambhogakaya form, and the practice of Guru Padmasambhava as *Senge Dharu* (Lion's Roar), a form of the Medicine Buddha.

In addition to the extensive program of teachings, retreatants participated in morning and evening practices each day, as well as some silent group practice, afternoon fire pujas, and the concluding raising of the Wind Horse energy.

On Thursday evening at

sunset, we gathered to practice for the very first time on the newly finished main floor of the temple, brushing away construction dust and pulling up concrete blocks as seats. Lama Chimed, the teachers' father, joined us to dedicate the construction. It is awe-inspiring to see each stage of our precious teachers' vision become reality. Thanks to the ample generosity of many sangha members, not only is the temple building reaching rapidly toward the sky, but the Khenpos' new home nearby is ready for their occupancy.

The Rambo Warrior award is given annually to the sangha member who has demonstrated outstanding devotion and service to the dharma. The selection of Rambo Warrior David Sullivan, Coordinator of PBC - San Francisco, was unanimously acclaimed. David, a long-time student, was much in all our minds as we did special practices during the retreat to support him in his battle with cancer.

The sangha house now has a well-equipped kitchen, including what Khenpo calls "the Mother of All Refrigerators," making the task of turning out three meals a day for a hundred people very convenient. Agatha Elmes patiently coordinated the efforts of the various regional groups who cooperatively prepared healthy vegetarian meals, and the willing volunteers who did the endless cleanup.

The Catskills weather, often stormy and unpredictable,

*Story continued on Page 10*

# PSL Building Projects

During the past year there have been several significant changes in the facilities at Padma Samye Ling. Now completed is the sangha house, "*Tsang Mang Keuru Ling*," which had previously functioned as the main building for shelter, shrine room and cooking.

The kitchen has been vastly improved—due to the efforts of many—with industrial strength cooking equipment. All proceeds from the PBC calendar fund raising project went towards finishing the kitchen with thanks to Lorraine O'Rourke—who spearheaded the project—Debbie Harbin, Nancy Roberts, and Janie Floren; thanks also to the West Palm Beach, New Jersey, and Maine sanghas, especially Cynthia and Carol for the magnificent freezer to complement the rest of our food storage units. Additionally,

there are now four showers, a well stocked dharma store courtesy of Carlos, and an office for registration.

At the recent summer retreat, students discovered a few new "arrivals" on the land: First, a new house for Rinpoches—completed just prior to the retreat—designed by architect and sangha member Patrick Avic de Buisson. The lovely home was donated by the Vajrakilaya Foundation so the Khenpos would have a residence to live and work in comfortably through all seasons. It has guest quarters for visiting lamas, wandering father-like Tibetan yogis coming up to escape the Florida summer heat, and the ever busy Ani Lorraine O'Rourke. It is a beautiful structure with a porch, Vajrayana red walls and a Dzogchen blue roof to remind us

of the highest view. Rinpoches blessed the house and had a small moving in party at the end of July.

The second newcomer is the Samye temple. This much larger edifice will be approximately 10,000 square feet of space designed much like the main temple at Samye, Tibet. It will be three stories high with a full basement. The basement is envisioned as having bathrooms, teaching and study rooms and storage space for dharma objects. The entry hall opens on the main floor to the large shrineroom

This *gompa* is planned to facilitate 230 practitioners comfortably during a teaching. It will be replete with murals in Tibetan style designed by the Khenpos, and coordinated by master thangka painter and wandering dharma artist at large,

(Continued on page 10)

## PADMASAMBHAVA BUDDHIST CENTER INVENTORY PRICE LIST OF SADHANAS (Practice Booklets)

Published for use by the students of the Ven. Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche and Ven. Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal Rinpoche and the Padmasambhava Buddhist Centers by Dharma Samudra, New York, N.Y., Dharma Samudra was created and is directed by the Rinpoches to help preserve the Nyingma Lineage Teachings of Tibetan Buddhism.

\* Indicates a Text Requiring Teachers Authorization

<u>Inventory</u>	<u>Item Description</u>	<u>Sales Price</u>
*Chod	Bellowing Laugh of the Dakini by Jigme Lingpa	7.00
*DP	Dharmapala Prayers, a Compilation	7.00
*DRA	Dark Red Amulet - Commentary on Vajrakilaya	15.00
*Manjusri	Golden Red Manjusri by Mipham	5.00
*Pec-Drappo	Guru Drappo by Tsasum Lingpa - Pecha Form	13.00
*Pec-VK	Vajrakilaya by Tsasum Lingpa - Pecha Form	10.00
*Riwo	Riwo Sang Chod by Namkha Jigme	5.00
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*VK	Vajrakilaya Sadhana by Tsasum Lingpa	7.00
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# THE SANGHA NEWS

## PBC BRIEFS

The Padmasambhava Buddhist Center  
is pleased to announce

THE ANNUAL PBC WINTER RETREAT  
Teachings On The Heart Sutra From The Dzogchen View

with  
Ven. Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche  
Ven. Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal Rinpoche

January 17 - 24, 1998  
West Palm Beach, Florida

**Location:**

Opening ceremonies & empowerment at Matlock Academy, 2491 Homewood Road, in West Palm Beach on Saturday, January 17 at 10:00 am.

**Accommodations:**

Area motels may be available at group rates; A list can be provided upon receipt of your registration. Matlock Academy is available for overnight stay with sleeping bags. Sangha members may open their homes for out of town guests; Please make arrangements with Florida friends as early as possible.

**Travel:**

The closest and most convenient airport is (PBI) Palm Beach International; Fort Lauderdale airport is 45 min. south of the retreat site.

**Meals:**

Breakfast and lunch will be provided.

**Suggested Donation:**

\$295 PBC Members (\$40/day)  
\$395 non-members (\$50/day)

**Registration:**

*We strongly suggest early registration by December 20 with a 25% deposit for beneficial planning and preparations. Upon receipt of deposit, retreatants receive more information. Please direct your phone inquiries to: Mandarava House 561/586.9941*

**Please...No Pets and No Taping**

**Please bring a meditation cushion & sadhanas (practice booklets)**

Please mail form below no later than December 20 with your check made payable to:

Padmasambhava Buddhist Center,  
1039 Churchill Circle No., West Palm Beach, FL 33405 Attn: Jon Ash, Treasurer



The 1998 PBC Winter Dzogchen Retreat  
Registration Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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Apt # \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Evening Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Day Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Deposit Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Check # \_\_\_\_\_

I have a car and will offer a ride to other retreatants in my area

I need information on area hotels/travel & map

## MANDARAVA HOUSE

PBC-West Palm Beach is happy to welcome back the Khenpos this winter bringing their incalculable blessings to Mandarava House. The center will once again host the annual PBC Winter Retreat, January 17 - 24, 1998.

The sangha was overjoyed to welcome home Lama Chimed from his extended stay in retreat this summer at PSL. The day after his arrival, he joined the sangha's Tuesday evening practice, and afterwards, eager students waited patiently to receive his blessing.

Mandarava House practice schedule: Meditation on Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 7:30pm; Tara Practice Thursdays at 7:30pm. When visiting the area, please join us; telephone 561/586-9941.

The  
Padmasambhava Buddhist Center

Internet Web Site Address:

<http://www.padmasambhava.org>

## AFFINITY FUND RAISING UPDATE: NEW DISCOUNTS

by Joe Scarpa

There are new discount rates from Affinity, a very successful long distance phone company fund-raising program that we—members and friends of PBC— have used for years. Every time you make a call you are effortlessly donating 8% to the Padmasambhava Buddhist Center—it's that simple!

Individuals who want to help PBC—even in a small way— can take advantage of this opportunity to offer on-going financial support by using a

*Continued on Page 9*

## THE GARDENS OF PSL

When you visit PSL any time this spring, the organic gardens are a wonderful way to expend some joyful effort which will yield immediate and long term benefits to oneself and others.

Work began last year toward enlarging the perennial flower and herb beds three fold. At the request of the Khenpos, upwards of 35 organic asparagus plants with their gorgeous fern-like foliage will be incorporated into these beds; in three years they should yield delightfully delicious early vegetables. These plants and the summer's vegetable seeds were "dropped in" Memorial Day. Myriad thanks to our members and friends of PBC-West Palm Beach, who have donated \$50.00 toward these purchases.

We are hoping that a substantial number of strong and able bodied *Dakas* and *Dakinis* will help dig, weed, nourish, plant, mulch, and water throughout the 1998 season. I find nothing more healing than getting "down and dirty" in the garden. The wonder and miracle of growth from the seed in the mud to the elegance and exuberance of the flower and robustness of the fruit, opens the heart. And as one becomes intimate with even the smallest patch of earth, awareness of the vast host of tiny helping beings is awakened. With this, appreciation showers within and upon us, nurturing a turning in the deepest seat of consciousness toward Bodhichitta.

Give yourself this gift. Come practice with us in the beautiful gardens of Padma Samye Ling. Love and blessings from your "garden umdze," Bonnie.

*May the merit gained by our acting thus go to the benefit of all sentient beings.* ♦

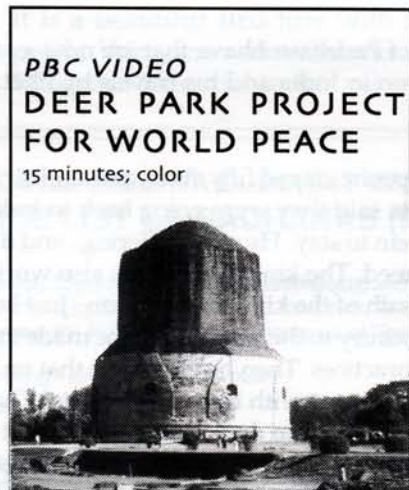
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## NEWSLETTER DONATIONS

An ocean of thanks from PBC to the following sanghas that have recently contributed to the operating costs of Pema Mandala:

Chicago, Orlando, New York, Princeton, Puerto Rico, Tennessee, and last but not least, West Palm Beach.



### PBC VIDEO DEER PARK PROJECT FOR WORLD PEACE

15 minutes; color

*"During Deer Park Project For World Peace, our beloved Rinpoches offer very personal testament, healing words, and gems of wisdom, illuminating the teachings of the Buddha to help all sentient beings. The unique and colorful sights and sounds of the city of Sarnath and the Deer Park itself with its very famous 54' Stupa built by King Asoka, skillfully create a canvas capturing the essence of India. The viewer is also treated to an extremely rare glimpse of an actual bone relic of Buddha Shakyamuni."*

*"...essential for everyone's video library collection...a rare and poignant interview with the Khenpos discussing their escape from Tibet and arrival in India...."*

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## HOMELESS PROJECT

PBC-NY Homeless Project continues to feed the needy every Sunday. Donations are appreciated since the kitty can get very low.

Clothes and bedding are also welcome, so are pairs of willing hands

Please send donations to:

**The Homeless Project**  
Padmasambhava Buddhist Center  
151 Lexington Avenue Apt. 8A  
New York, New York 10016

## PEMA MANDALA UPDATE

We welcome articles, short stories, sangha news, poetry, photos, & artwork related to dharma/PBC. Please mail or fax your submissions typed in initial caps only, double spaced, on 8 1/2 by 11 plain white paper, or 3 1/2 HD (high density) microdisks, and send to:

PEMA MANDALA

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Att: Editor, Nancy Ash

FAX 561/659-8075

(Attention: Jon Ash)

SUBMISSIONS FOR NEXT ISSUE  
ARE DUE JANUARY 10, 1998

## PSL RETREAT NEWS

Last spring—before the work retreat—my husband, Phil, and I drove up to PSL with more than 1,500 lbs. of tile and related supplies. My husband had been a customer of the American Olean Co. for some 25 years. They were bought by Daltile. Mr. Mercier at Daltile was extremely generous by donating all these supplies at a value of \$3,839.10!

Phil, with my help (can you see it), installed most of the first two showerstalls in the 4 days he could stay. Ron from New Jersey and Carol of Maine did the lionshare on the other two. Max's men (the builders) finished them beautifully! Thank

*Continued on page 11*

## Padmasambhava and the Ngondro from Page 3

and duality our perceptions are ordinary regular perceptions. When we remove clinging and duality our perception is known as pure perception.

MW We have heard that Padmasambhava was a great Indian master who was called to Tibet in the eighth century by the king to help establish Buddhism. There seem to be many legends concerning his stay in Tibet. How long was Padmasambhava in Tibet?

KPSR In the histories there are many stories but the most popular say that he stayed one hundred and eleven years, but this counts the waxing and waning of the moon as two months, so this is really only fifty-five years and six months. About eighty to ninety per cent of the histories written by the great masters agree with this figure.

MW I have heard that he only stayed eighteen months.

KPSR Yes, that is true, some say that he only stayed six months or eighteen months or only for a few years. It could appear that way because the activities of Guru Rinpoche do not necessarily conform to our mundane conceptions. His activities are not always compatible with conceptions which are based on duality. Some people say he only spent a period of a few months in the capital and the rest of the time he spent in the mountains and caves. Then he would occasionally visit the capital or the king would go to the mountains to see him. These events took place over a thousand years ago. Even in modern times, if we take something that happened to a renowned person and write a history about it, the different people who write about it will not necessarily agree about what they write. We want to believe that these accounts are realistic and accurate and are based on direct perception. However, even books about Jimmy Carter or Ronald Reagan will contain different accounts.

MW There are several biographies of Padmasambhava that are now available and they all tell about his birth and the stories of his youth and his education in India and his travels in Tibet. Do you know any accounts about what happened after he left Tibet?

KPSR There is a reason that Guru Rinpoche stayed fifty-five years and six months. After finishing Samye monastery both Padmasambhava and Santarakshita said they were going back to India. King Trisong Detsen told them that he and the Tibetan people really needed them to stay. He made offerings and did many prostrations and asked them both to stay until his death and they both agreed. The king's sons were also working for the dharma and Padmasambhava stayed for another five years after the death of the king to help them. Just before he left he told the ministers, the court and his students that he was going to a country to the west. When he made this announcement he gave final instructions about maintaining the dharma and the practices. Then he told them that on a certain day he would leave. On that day the king and the court and many students went with him to a mountain named Gungthang Lathog on the border of Tibet and Nepal. At this mountain pass he stopped and told everyone that he would leave from this spot and no one should follow him any further. All the people were very emotional. He began giving his final teaching and then began levitating up into the sky. He continued teaching as he went up and as he was rising into the air a horse appeared and he rode the horse off into the western direction. He said that to the west was a country filled with cannibals and that he was going there to teach them to be bodhisattvas. All the histories agree that this is how he left and where he went. Yeshe Tsogyal reported that he reached his destination safely. Other students who had developed great powers of meditation also reported that he had arrived safely. He went to a country named Copper Glory Mountain.

MW Is this a legendary country or a geographic location?

KPSR We can't tell exactly. It is similar to Shambhala. According to Buddhist geography there are four major continents and eight sub-continents. This is one of the sub-continents. After he left he returned many times. He came back to see Yeshe Tsogyal and in later times returned to give teachings to many of the great masters.

MW Was this in the visionary state or in person?

KPSR He came in visions, in dreams and in person. All the great tertons have had this experience. The tertons all go to Copper Glory Mountain either in visions or in dreams or in the direct perception state. All the great masters report this in their biographies. They go at least one time and some go many times. They get instructions and teaching and then come back and reveal the teachings they received. Just like United States Senators go to Washington D.C., the tertons go to Copper Glory Mountain! ♦



# NYUNGNE PRACTICE

by Toy-Fung Tung

The Ven. Khenpos Rinpoche have led the sangha in the Nyungne retreat according to Gelongma Palmo's Avalokiteshvara practice about a half dozen times over the years.

Nyungne demands the taking of vows of abstinence for a forty-two hour period, starting at the noonday meal of the first day, lasting for an entire second day, and ending at dawn on the third day. During this period, we fasted and restricted our speech to the recitation of mantras and sadhanas. Of course, in their kindness, the Lamas excused those in ill health from the fasting requirements, and they reminded everyone, in this as in all other practices, not to exceed one's capabilities. Nyungne vows belong to a special category of commitments, undertaken temporarily for a specific retreat period. We took our vows communally, before the noonday meal, and we repeated them at the beginning of each recitation of the Avalokiteshvara sadhana, which we did twice each day. From noon

of the first day, we devoted ourselves entirely to Avalokiteshvara practice; and even when not reciting the sadhana, we recited the six-syllable mantra as much as possible.

Nyungne is not an act of self-mortification or self-punishment, in which one suffers in order to repent of wrongdoing. Our Lamas are always reminding us that cyclic existence is temporary and, therefore, we should renounce all ego-clinging. Everything, including one's own body, is, as Khenpo Tsewang Rinpoche likes to say, "on temporary loan." The point of Nyungne is to experience the meaning of this viscerally and not simply intellectually. Longchenpa counted the precious human body as one of the eight freedoms, without which dharma is impossible. Denying the body, therefore, is an act of remembering and accepting the impermanence of samsara and of our own bodily existence.

Gelongma Palmo is one of the few famous women siddhis, and this thousand-armed Avalokiteshvara sadhana of hers is practiced by all sects of Tibetan Buddhism. When she contracted leprosy, which was a very dread disease at that time, she

did not despair. Committing herself to Avalokiteshvara's infinite compassion, she cured herself by discovering and repeating the very practice which has come down to us. A remarkable feature of Gelongma Palmo's sadhana is a beautiful song in praise of Avalokiteshvara, which came to her spontaneously when, through her meditation powers, she saw Avalokiteshvara face to face. Gelongma Palmo's poetry was not the product of art and artifice, but a reflection of her own inner realization of wisdom mind. After explaining this to us, Khenchen Palden Rinpoche and Khenpo Tsewang Rinpoche gave us the great blessing of leading us in reciting this song with its traditional tunes, exactly as they learned it in their homeland in Tibet.

After Nyungne, "breakfast," or "breaking the fast" assumed a new significance. Traditionally, the practice concludes at the dawning of the first light. At 5:30 a.m., we gathered in the shrine room to recite the entire sadhana one final time. After sharing the bumpa

*Continued on page 11*

## Sangha News: Affinity from page 6

service one would have to pay for anyway!

Affinity has introduced a very competitive flat rate program for residential and business users. The best plan for residential is the Simple Plan. The long distance rate is a flat 15¢ per minute with no domestic surcharge, and 10-12¢ per minute for intrastate (instate) calls. Also, the Travel Card rate on this plan is a flat 25¢ per minute with no domestic surcharge. This is probably the best Travel Card rate available today. The Simple Commercial Plan is 12¢ per minute for long distance, 10-12¢ for intrastate, and 25¢ per minute for

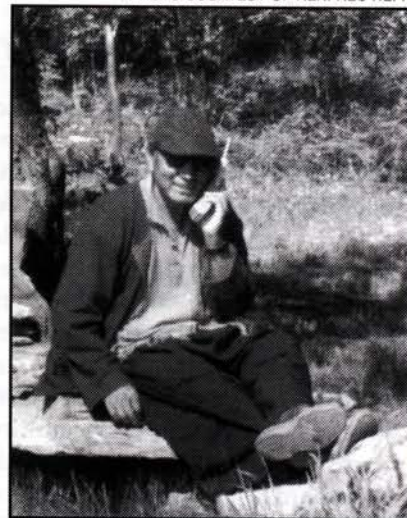
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Please call me for more info at 561/368-5853. Thanks to the new Affinity users who signed up since the last issue of Pema Mandala. ♦

PHOTO COURTESY OF RENFREU NEFF



*Khenpo Tsewang during a Kriya Yoga Retreat at PSL, pauses to help one of his many students.*

# Vajrasattva/Vajrakilaya Fire Puja Practice

by Nancy Lichtenstein

Khenchen Palden and Khenpo Tsewang perform the Vajrasattva fire puja and Vajrakilaya ritual practice ceremonies every year to purify obscurations and negativities and to create harmony and world peace.

Dharma students from many of their centers around the country sit each morning in close-packed companionability—before a high mantled fireplace—to join their intentions with Rinpoches, as they perform the purification rites, and feed the fire with offerings. Khenchen Palden, using ritual implements, pours oil offerings while chanting the ritual prayers; Khenpo Tsewang, joining him in prayer, offers grains, seed, butter, honey, yogurt, spices, grasses, herbs and other offerings.

As the Khenpos perform the offerings and ritual prayers, and the fire of cedar, juniper, pine and other evergreens flame, the congregation joins their voices in

prayer for purification of negativities and obscurations, and for peace and harmony for all sentient beings. A plate of black mustard seed is passed through the congregation for each of us to expel our negativities and obscurations into it with our breath.

On the afternoons and evenings during this 3-5 day practice, the congregation joins the Khenpos in the more wrathful Vajrakilaya practice. Vajrakilaya, a principal deity of the eight Heruka sadhanas taught by Guru Padmasambhava, is primordial wisdom itself, Vajrakilaya expresses unhindered action and accomplishment within the state of primordial wisdom. His dagger of emptiness cuts through all ego clinging, conceptuality and obstacles. Cleansed by these practices, the congregation offers the merit for the benefit of all sentient beings. ♦

*You are invited to participate in this special 3-day practice held on Thursday, January 1, (not on the 2nd) Saturday and Sunday, January 3-4, 1998, in New York City*

## Dzogchen Retreat from 4

was unusually warm, sunny, and benign this year. Tall black rubber boots, essential retreat equipment in previous years, weren't needed at all. In fact, severe drought made it necessary to briefly limit water use, which made the hot showers even more appreciated later, when the limits were eased. An atmosphere of friendliness and love, a combination of sociability and quiet reflection, gave each retreatant the chance to practice the "mindfulness that is like a distant lifeguard" invoked by the teachers. ♦



*Rinpoches lead retreatants at Padma Samye Ling during the Dzogchen Retreat*

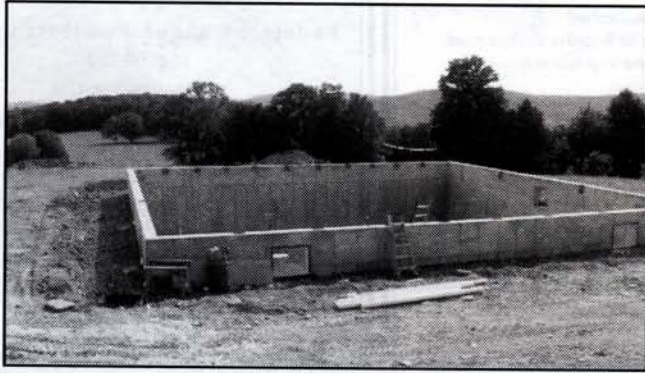
## PSL Projects from page 5

Michel Dunham, and his cast of sangha artists. The second floor features a library and study area which will house PBC's already very complete Nyingma library. It will likely be the most complete collection of Tibetan Buddhist and Nyingma texts in the United States (outside of major universities or the Library of Congress). Computer, audio/visual and copying equipment will assist scholarly activities. The plan for the third floor is a smaller private shrine room featuring a display of rare Tibetan ritual objects. Walkways will surround the second and third floors.

The Samye temple project is going very smoothly and is progressing nicely. The building is also being donated by the Vajrakilaya foundation, and has been the beneficiary of several generous donations by humble sangha members who would prefer to remain anonymous, but who are deeply thanked for their kindness.

Additionally, it was announced during the summer retreat that there are plans to build a dormitory in 1998 to provide housing to augment the sangha house. This building will be funded by donations, which will be matched by the Vajrakilaya Foundation. Already \$40,000 has been raised. The dormitory will be owned by PBC with sangha members, friends and supporters of PBC paying a nominal donation for their stay. The rooms will be available on a first-come, first-served basis. For a host of reasons, including zoning regulations and tax deduction laws, the building will not be subdivided for ownership by sangha members. It is anticipated that this dormitory will be the first of additional buildings of its kind.

Money has been gathered, and plans for design and construction of a stupa and meditation gardens are moving



PHOTOS COURTESY OF RON WAGNER

along quickly. We are not certain of the targeted completion date, but as all things seem to happen in our magical land, this author feels it will "rang jung" sooner than expected.

It is the vision of the Khenpos that Padma Samye Ling become a sanctuary for Tibetan Buddhist teaching, practice, and cultural preservation in the west. Eventually there will be a year round curriculum including: Tibetan language and culture, Buddhist philosophy, art, sutra, tantra and dzogchen studies. In short, it will be a *shedra* —Tibetan Buddhist monastic college and retreat place—in the style begun in Samye, Tibet in the 8th Century.

I would like to pay homage and respect to all of you who have helped to date in these projects and also to all of you who have made good use of the facilities to further your wish to be of benefit of all sentient beings. May this great work continue at its wonderful and powerful pace.

If you have questions or other communications, a wish to donate funds to Vajrakilaya Foundation for Samye Temple at PSL, please contact me at the following:

Thank you all sincerely,  
William Hinman  
President, Vajrakilaya Foundation

e-mail: [whinman@saraswati.com](mailto:whinman@saraswati.com)  
Vajrakilaya Foundation  
2040 N. Mohawk Street  
Chicago, IL USA 60614

*The Samye Temple foundation (l) and first floor shrine hall structure complete. (October, 97) (r) Framework for the second floor rising up to the sky now in view.*

### PSL Retreat News from page 7

you all, and thank you Mr. Mercier and Daltile.

Many thanks go out to all the wonderful people who helped cook and clean up during the summer retreat. Special thanks go to Steven and Denise of the West Palm Beach sangha and Kirby from Tennessee who were always lending a hand. Also, Toni of Puerto Rico, Mary Ann with the Florida group, Cynthia for Maine (she and Joe from Florida did the planning and buying for the kitchen), Ashley for Delaware, Margaret for New York, and Bill for Chicago helped coordinate meals. It is really special to be involved this way during retreat. I am looking forward to seeing you next year. Tashi Deleg. ♦

*Agatha Elmes-Chicago*

### Nyungne Continued from 5

water into which we had invoked the blessings of Avalokiteshvara during our three days of practice, we ended our silence and fast. Our delicious meal included the ceremonial rice soup, with which this fast is usually broken. As a reminder that we practice for the benefit of all sentient beings, the traditional instructions admonish the practitioner to think that the first drops of water and food are going to the microscopic cellular creatures that co-exist symbiotically with us in our bodies.

We concluded our retreat with a special short fire puja, discovered by the first Kongtrul, which is a condensed one-substance offering that can be appended to any other practice. As we sat bathed in the sunshine of a gloriously clear morning, we were all jubilant, none more so than the many sangha members who had just completed their very first Nyungne practice, some of whom had never done any kind of retreat before. ♦

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See Page 6 for Registration

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