



Pema Mandala

NEWSLETTER OF THE PADMASAMBHAVA BUDDHIST CENTERS Spring 1996 Vol. 2

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

NEW YORK

May 25 - 27 Padma Samye Ling
Memorial Day
Weekend Retreat

May 28 - June 1 Padma Samye Ling
Kriya Yoga
Community Week

June 1 Padma Samye Ling
Stupa Project
Ground-breaking
Ceremony

July 19 Padma Samye Ling
Celebrating 1st
Turning of the Wheel
of Dharma by Buddha
at Sarnath

July 20 - 28 Padma Samye Ling
Summer Retreat
DZOGPA CHENPO
SAMTAN NGALSO
(Relaxation Meditation)
Dzogchen Teachings
by Longchenpa

OTHER PADMASAMBHAVA BUDDHIST CENTERS

April 11 - 14 Puerto Rico
April 15 - 17 Orlando, Florida
April 18 - 25 W. Palm Beach, Florida
April 28 Princeton, New Jersey
May 10 - 13 Chicago, Illinois
May 18 - 19 Tennessee
June 8 - 9 Delaware
June 22 - 23 Madison, Wisconsin

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

PBC Monastery Inauguration in India



Padma Samye Chokhor Ling, Sarnath, India

The Khenpos traveled to India recently to commemorate the inauguration of their Tibetan Buddhist Monastery, Padma Samye Chokhor Ling. Prior to the event, a few of the Khenpos' devoted students arrived--weary from days of arduous travel but cheerful--from around the world to participate in the auspicious ceremonies. One by one, or in small groups, they appeared smiling at the ornate red metal gates of Padma Samye Chokhor Ling (PSCL), the most colorful, tallest and finely built structure in Sarnath. The following dedication by Khenchen Palden and Khenpo Tsewang is excerpted from ceremonies held in the magnificent shrine room of the monastery:

"With great devotion we pay homage and offer this deed to the Three Jewels: Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, to all masters of the wisdom lineage of the glorious Nyingmapas. May this monastery become the source of inspiration for study, contemplation and meditation upon the teachings of Buddha Shakyamuni and Guru Padmasambhava. Buddha Shakyamuni gave his first teachings to five human students, 80,000 celestial beings and many animals.

(please turn to page 2)

His message of love, compassion, equality and nonviolence is for all sentient beings without exception. Many of those initial receivers of the teachings attained Arhathood. The Deer Park, said to be the birthplace of Buddhism, is one of the most important pilgrimage sites, the place where the light of the Buddha's teaching first began to shine for the entire world.

As the Deer Park was so important to Buddhism, around 260 B.C., Ashoka--the greatest king in India's history--erected a 54-foot stone pillar topped with four lions facing in the four directions. The lions symbolize the Buddha's first teaching--the Four Noble Truths. Until the 12th

century, Sarnath continued to be a major site for Buddhist pilgrimages. Many great masters, members of royal families, numerous renowned scholars and devoted men and women came to this area to worship and pay their respects--benefitting from their efforts.

Due to the significance of this site, in 1972 the Ven. Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche purchased a piece of property according to the inspiration and blessings of H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche. From 1972 until 1990, due to financial circumstances, no projects were initiated on this land except its maintenance and the erection of a small shrine. Through the continued blessings and

PHOTO COURTESY OF DEBI HARBIN



The Rinpoches are joined by one hundred of their honored guests and students during the inauguration ceremonies in the PSCL Shrine Room.

PILGRIMAGE WITH THE KHENPOS

When the Lord Buddha announced the date of his Mahaparinirvana, many of his disciples were distraught and asked him, "What shall we do? How will those who do not see you receive your teachings?" Buddha told them that his followers should journey to and meditate at the holy places where his enlightened activities occurred.

After the dedication of PSCL, the Khenpos arranged for 35 students to travel with them by bus on a Pilgrimage to many of these sacred sites. Though unable to visit *Lumbini*, the birthplace of the Lord Buddha, the first stop was *The Deer Park at Sarnath*

where they were given an incredibly rare blessing: a private viewing of an actual bone relic of Buddha.

A twelve-hour bus ride brought them to *Shravasti*, where Buddha spent 25 years in retreat during the rainy seasons and where he performed miraculous activities. During a two-day visit, the Khenpos dedicated 4 acres of beautiful land--site for their next monastery. As twilight faded in the *Jetvan Gardens* there were wild green parrots and monkeys everywhere. Khenchen and Khenpo led their students to the remains of the Buddha's house for meditation by the light of hundreds of candles.

They climbed the small
(continued on the next page)

inspiration of H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche to fulfill this vision, in 1990 the Ven. Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche and the Ven. Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal Rinpoche undertook work on the *Padma Samye Chokhor Ling, Deer Park Project for World Peace.* "

DEDICATIONS

"We hereby acknowledge the great kindness and generosity of the following individuals, who assisted in the completion of this project:

Pema Jamtso (Janie Floren), who was the major force in completing this project.

Lorraine O'Rourke (Pema Saldron)
Lars Cederholm (Orgyan Dorje)
Bill Hinman (Pema Drimed)
Beba and Felix Bebo (Pema Dolma & Pema Tsering)
Michael and Margaret Dunham (Pema Namdrol and Pema Longdron)
Ven. Swami Sambhavananda & Faith Stone
Alice Shapiro (Pema Yudron)
Rodney Devins (Ven. Lama Kunzang)
Rudy Burckhardt & Yvonne Jacqueline-Burckhardt (Pema Odzer and Pema Gedron)
Nancy Lichtenstein (Pema Zangmo)
Michael Dunham on behalf of Doris Dunham
Linda and Michael Zilinger
Ruslan Mamedov
Mimi Hohenberg
Larry Rockwood (Pema Thebkhe)
Nelson Dudley

We are also grateful to the numerous other donors who most generously contributed to this project.

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Project Supervisors & Architectural Designers:

Ven. P. Orgyan Tendzin
Namdak Rinchen
Ven. Khenpo Pema Gyaltzen Rinpoche

Temple Mural Artists:

Design: Michael Dunham
assisted by: Tilghman Branner,
Nepalese and Indian artists,
Anna Rohegova

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THE BLACK SNAKE RETREAT

by mimi bailey

PHOTO COURTESY OF NANCY ASH



Sangha gather around the Khenpos during The Black Snake Retreat

From January 6-13, nearly the close of the Wood Pig Year of Tibetan Buddhism, the Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche and Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal Rinpoche gave the Black Snake Teachings (*Drul Nag Tong Thun*) of Rongzom Maha Pandita Chokyi Zangpo, usually known as Rongzumpa, esteemed 11th century Tibetan Buddhist Master of Vajrayana and Dzogchen.

Mandarava House in West Palm Beach was brimming with students from many of the Padmasambhava Buddhist Centers around the US and Puerto Rico, delighted to hear this first presentation of these rare and precious teachings to the Western world. Each morning everyone waited eagerly for the turning of the vast wheel of the Dharma.

Laying before us the cornerstones of Vajrayana and Dzogchen as contained within the Black Snake Treatise, the teaching held all the

elements of the 9 *yanas* (vehicles), from Awakened Heart to the vistas of the Great Emptiness. Khenchen taught: "The Black Snake as the six realms is merely a reflection of the mind, and by seeing that everything is a reflection, there is no grasping, no fear, no suffering. This is the heart of the Dzogchen system."

The Khenpos have generously brought the teachings of Tibetan Buddhism with their incalculable blessings to Florida for over a decade now. Encircled by All Accomplishing Wisdom, they continue to encourage us along the path. "Maybe we cannot actualize the teachings of Rongzumpa in this moment, but we can practice kindness, doing good things for one another," said Khen Rinpoche.

With spacious, fresh view may we have good practice in the Fire Mouse Year and may we commit many acts of kindness!

(Pilgrimage from page 2)

"miracle mountain" the next morning, where the Buddha performed many miracles for the people of Shrivasti. Late that night the bus arrived at a very simple pilgrim rest house in the town of *Vishali*, where the Lord Buddha turned the third Wheel of Dharma. Here the serene monkey pond and great ruins of King Ashoka's monuments to the Buddha remind pilgrims of his powerful legacy.

Kushnagar, where the Lord Buddha went to Mahaparinirvana, was another profound place for

pilgrims. Here the Khenpos, as they did at each site, gave teachings and led practices. Circumambulating the radiant giant gold reclining Buddha



Reclining gold Buddha at Kushnagar.

(Continued on page 4)

A BUDDHIST SOLDIER'S STORY: ALLEY OF SACRED GROUND

by
Capt. Lawrence P. Rockwood

I accidentally stepped on a woman. She was lying in a dark alley, a space I ran into because I feared I was being followed. A few hours before I was meditating on the Mother of All the Buddhas to establish a framework of fearlessness for my pending endeavor through the hostile streets of an occupied country. Little did I know the lesson on genuine fearlessness I was about to receive from a woman in a dark muddy alley.

She hit and pushed me, and roared in protest. The dirty section of alley was hers and she had no other place to go. No soldier with a loaded rifle and a foreign uniform was going to force her from it. She knew the sight of soldiers killing and stood her ground regardless. She was ready to die that ground. I, however, was not, and suddenly the street I just escaped from did not seem so inhospitable, armed thugs and all--so I left. Instantly I was wiser than moments before.

Weeks prior to this--in September, 1994--I landed in Haiti with the Multinational Forces as a Captain in the U.S. Army with fifteen years of service under my belt. Months before the invasion, which was supposed to "stop the brutal atrocities," I received intelligence reports of torture in the Haitian jails. My superiors were aware but indifferent to these reports of inhumane abuses and suffering of the people. Concerned with human rights violations particularly in the National Penitentiary in Port-au-Prince, I attempted to conduct an unauthorized survey of tortured prisoners on my own. Subsequently, I was court martialled for doing so. Even though I knew that this activity would probably end my long military career, I had to act quickly to try and save lives. At least on the

(Please turn to page 7)

(Monastery Dedications from page 2)

We dedicate this merit to the long life of the Lama Chimed Namgyal for his presence in this world.

**MEMORIALS:
WE DEDICATE THIS MERIT TO
OUR LATE BELOVED:**

Mother, Pema Lhazes
Sister, Yang Zom
Sister, Ting Ting Karmo
Uncle, Mayang wang Drag
Aunt, Jomo Karma Chodron
Aunt, Jomo Tsodhi
Niece, Tsamo

and also:

In memory of Dr. Rhoda P. LeCoque
Uddiyana Mitra Kosha, In memory of
Ven. Lucille Shaible
Susan Grimshaw, In memory of Seconda J.
Shmidt and George W. Grimshaw
Marie Friquegnon, In memory of
Isabel Friquegnon
Lorraine O'Rourke, In memory of
Catherine O'Rourke

And to all those who assisted, their family members and friends who have passed away.

Dedicated to World Peace, Padma Samye Chokhor Ling, Deer Park Project For World Peace was completed by the Venerable Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche and the Venerable Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal Rinpoche:

2540 years after Buddha Shakyamuni's MahaParinirvana; 2533 years after the Birth of the Second Buddha, Guru Padmasambhava; In the First Month of the Fire Mouse year in the Tibetan Royal year of 2127; On the 4th day of Lord Buddha's Miraculous Activities;

This day of
A.D. February 22, 1996."

(Pilgrimage from page 3)

statue marking the place of his death, they recited mantras with their malas.

Reaching *Rajagrih*, lying in a pleasant valley, one-by-one pilgrims were lifted up by an aerial ropeway chair lift to the high hilltop Vishwa Shanti Stupa and then further up to *Vulture Peak Mountain*. Here the Buddha turned the second Wheel of Dharma, bringing forth the Prajnaparamita teachings.

Just as they were finishing meditation practices on top of Vulture's Peak, a vulture gracefully swooped low around the pilgrims. It was a timeless moment.

Later that day at the vast ruins of a great university, Khenpos gave teachings at *Nalanda*, where the Buddha extended his life.

The last holy place of the pilgrimage was in *Bodhgaya*, the place of Buddha's enlightenment. Early morning practice at a colossal temple (180 feet) was followed by teachings and practices at the famous bodhi tree. Then pilgrims offered some of their hair and placed it in a Stupa near the tree, thus leaving a part of themselves in India.

PHOTO COURTESY OF DEBI HARBIN



During the Pilgrimage, Rinpoches are surrounded by their students in Shravasti, India in front of a newly erected sign for Padma Samye Jetvan, their forthcoming Tibetan Buddhist Monastery.

PBC-NY HOMELESS PROJECT

by
Marie Friquegnon

The New York Center continues to provide Sunday dinner to homeless women at an armory in Brooklyn which houses a shelter. The shelter has no kitchen. The city provides prepared rations, but we give them their only home cooked weekly meal. The menu includes chili, chicken, vegetables, rice, soda and homebaked cake. On Christmas Eve we made turkey with stuffing, sweet potatoes and cranberry sauce.

The women come from varied backgrounds and races. There is even one from India. Some are disabled, but others work and try to save enough money for rent and security for an apartment. We don't discuss Buddhism unless they ask, but we do say grace. If we forget, they remind us. When they ask what the grace means, we tell them we are showing respect for the Buddha, the teaching and the people.

These women wouldn't starve without our food, but they benefit from it in many ways. The vegetables are especially good for them, especially Toy Tung's turnips and cabbage. Her husband Peter's marinated chicken is "out of sight." But more important is the fact that we care enough about them to make "homemade".

We try to bring as many warm coats and other clothes as possible. Blankets and sheets are also needed. The city doesn't seem to have many resources available right now, so we also feed the shelter's two pet cats, Frank and Princess. They are

(Continued on Back Cover)

KALMIKA DIARY

by Ron Wagner

Kalmika is a sparsely populated independent region of Russia located about 1,000 miles south of Moscow, bordering the Caspian Sea, near Iran and Turkey; It's population is about 95% Buddhist. Upon invitation, the Rinpoches recently traveled to the capitol, Elista, to offer the first Nyingma Teachings since the Russian Revolution. Subsequently, a new chapter of The Padmasambhava Buddhist Center was born.

PBC-Princeton Sangha member, Ron Wagner, was fortunate to accompany the Rinpoches on their trip to Russia and then to Kalmika. The following anecdotes are excerpted from his diary of their travels. He also documented the experience on video and shares his photographs with us.

Upon arrival yesterday in Elista, Kalmika, as we taxied up to the terminal, I saw a large crowd awaiting our plane. People in ethnic dress, dancers and a band. I thought they were waiting for the Khenpos but then we learned that the President of Kalmika (a Buddhist) was also on our plane. Though the crowd was not for him either--but for a returning boxing champion!

There was however, a group to meet the Khenpos. After greetings, we crammed--including all of our luggage--into several small cars and headed off to town. The roads were rutted and dusty, the countryside was green and golden--but dry. As we entered the city of Elista, the buildings have a "sameness" about them--all concrete and a bit drab. I later discovered that Elista was a Russian state rebuilt from rubble after Stalin's death.

We arrive at the "flat" where I will be staying with the Khenpos, Misha and Losha, two students of the Rinpoches from the Moscow Sangha. Misha, Losha and I share a room with two beds. We discuss sleeping arrangements: Losha says that since he is a monk, he always sleeps on the floor; I am very happy to have a bed. The rest of our group (ten students from PBC-Moscow) stay in town.

We rested and were served a huge lunch which was very good. Later that night there was a big dinner including the first salad I have had since leaving America. Khenchen Palden and Khenpo Tsewang seem very happy and excited about their upcoming teachings. These will be the first Nyingma Teachings here since the Russian Revolution in 1917.

Badder is our Kalmik host. He takes the Khenpos and Misha to the location for the teachings. I am told a car



Rebirth of the Nyingma Tradition with the Rinpoches.

will come for me but it does not...so the women who were cooking for us gesture that I should follow them. We arrive at a bus stop where we cram into a van for the trip to the center, which looks like an office building. Up on the fifth floor a large crowd is waiting.

The Kalmikans have beautiful round Mongolian faces with a quiet, calm and warming quality. The people here range from teenagers to the elderly. I wonder about the stories behind these beautiful faces. Maintaining the Buddhist faith has not been easy. I am in awe of the devotion and joy that surrounds me. The older women are saying mantras with their malas as they await the Rinpoches. I am beginning to see what special blessings the Lamas bring by coming here: I am witnessing the rebirth of the Nyingma Tradition in Kalmika. The meaning of devotion is alive in this room--in these wonderful people. It's a gift to be here.

After the program, we return to the flat with Kalmik and Moscow folk to plan a schedule for the rest of our visit. The Khenpos ask what the people want from them. The planning is open and giving as the Rinpoches respond with kindness and humor to what is being requested of them.



Top: The people of Kalmika waiting patiently for the first Nyingma Teachings since the Russian Revolution almost eighty years ago. Bottom: Rinpoches lead the circumambulation of a puja fire in Elista, Kalmika.

I learn that there is a New Jersey/Kalmik "connection." Three Temples in New Jersey were started by Kalmiks who fled with the Russians after the revolution.

The Kalmiks first came to this Russian region from Mongolia in the 13th century bringing Buddhism with them. They built many Temples and Monasteries, keeping a strong Tibetan Buddhist tradition for many centuries. The Kalmiks were horsemen and warriors who always fought for and with the czars, so during the revolution they were on the losing side. Subsequently, Lenin emptied the region, killing many Kalmiks--scattering the rest. When Stalin came to power, he continued this mass destruction, leveling 130 Temples. The area remained virtually empty until after Stalin's death when the Kalmiks started rebuilding. It was not until 1988 that the people could openly practice Buddhism again.

Time is moving so quickly; I have been experiencing alot. Sipping Kalmik tea (butter, milk, and tea) I am awaiting the Khenpos return. We are being treated so kindly here--it's wonderful. Three women arrive very early in the morning to start preparing our meals.

(Continued on page 7)

Sangha news

The Padmasambhava Buddhist Center is very happy to announce the official formation of a new chapter located in **Madison, Wisconsin**. The sangha received their tax free status in January of 1996 shortly after the Rinpoches conferred the first Guru Padmasambhava Empowerment ever given in Madison.

Three Madison Sangha members traveled to West Palm Beach, Florida to attend the 1996 PBC Annual Winter Retreat called "The Black Snake" (Drul Nag Tong Thun).

PBC of Madison meets on Wednesday evenings for Heart Sutra practice and meditation. Other special activities include: The 10th day celebration with the Shower of Blessings Puja; on the 25th day, Yeshe Tsogyal practice; and Riwo Sang Chod practice. A warm welcome is extended to any Sangha sisters and brothers visiting the area to stay and practice together with them. Please contact the Co-coordinators: Annalou Zeitz or Kevin McConeghey at 608/255.4588 for more information.

A new PBC group is blossoming in the **Huntsville, Alabama** area. There are a few dedicated students of our Rinpoches practicing regularly while actively engaging in dharma related activities within the community. To correspond, or for more information on their practice schedule, please contact: John Waller, 365 Shelton Road, Apt. 139, Madison, Alabama 35758.

Miami, Florida has a group of students practicing in the home of Pat Thomas. For more information about this growing PBC Sangha, please call : 305/665.3376, or write: PBC c/o Pat Thomas, 4700 SW 67 Ave. #P-6, So. Miami, Florida 33155-5883.

PBC-Princeton meets on Sundays at 291 Witherspoon Street, under the sponsorship of Fellowship

in Prayer, for an hour of prayer, meditation, and chanting, beginning at 10 a.m.; All are invited to attend. The officers of the sangha are Ven. Gelongma Trime Lhamo, of Kendall Park, Paul Walsh, of Princeton, and Ron Wagner, of Trenton. For more information, call 609/924-6863 or write: PBC c/o Paul Walsh
Fellowship in Prayer
291 Witherspoon Street
Princeton, New Jersey 08542

Construction and interior-decorating has been accomplished on the addition to **Mandarava House** in West Palm Beach, Florida. The project included expansion of the existing Lamas' quarters: larger kitchen and bath facilities, and a small bedroom for Khenpo Tsewang which features a sky-light and separate entrance.

Sangha members were also very busy this winter refurbishing and

(Continued on back cover)

The Dharma Gets Plugged In

Need a copy of the Lotus Sutra? Want to know what the Dalai Lama has said recently? Need a graphic of a flaming dorje? Need it now, with no waiting? Well, it's as close as your nearest Internet connection! The Dharma has gone digital.

For those of you who have access to the Internet, there is a wealth of resources just waiting for you to download. Texts, bibliographies, sadhanas, pictures, graphics, interviews, merchandise--it's all out there in cyberland. Here are a few sites to get you started:

The Dalai Lama page (<http://1www.manymedia.com/tibet/DalaiLama.html>). There's a great picture of The Dalai Lama, interviews with His Holiness, his Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech, a recent teaching on compassion, and much more. Everyone with a modem has got to visit this site.

For sheer volume and number of hypertext connections, the Coombs site is unbeatable (<http://coombs.anu.edu.au>). A huge Internet resource list, a virtual library of sutras and texts, information on all major Buddhist sects and divisions. Check out the file <on-buddha.txt>, a wonderful commentary on taking refuge which would interest both beginners and old-timers alike. Want to write your granny a letter in Sanskrit? This is the place to pick up a set of fonts. Want Tibetan fonts? They're here too, in the Asian Studies archive.

Another great resource on the Web is the home page of Quiet Mountain (<http://quietmountain.com/links/BUDDHISM.HTM>). Here you can find links to many Nyingma centers. Check out the cool picture of the Himalayas! Quiet Mountain also offers FREE homepage access for any Buddhist group that is willing to put one together and maintain it.

Want to join the *cyberdharma* virtual community? It's there! A very active newsgroup (alt.religion.buddhism.tibetan) welcomes discussion, and is an excellent source of new Web sites. There is also a fairly active chat group (IRC channel #Tibet) as well. A small study or discussion group might want to post a meeting time and topic on the newsgroup, and then meet on the IRC for a real-time exchange of ideas. Happy surfing!

-- Pema Namdrol (Tom Felt is <platfelt@ix.netcom.com>

Tom Felt, a member of PBC, is an English Teacher residing in West Palm Beach

Millions of people worldwide will have access on the Internet soon to the very first film of an actual Buddhist Pilgrimage in India. The Ven. Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche and the Ven. Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal Rinpoche will bring precious teachings to the world as they travel with a few of their students in the footsteps of the Buddha. Professionally filmed and edited by Cliff and Debi Harbin, the video will be available at the Web site of the Padmasambhava Buddhist Center.

The Padmasambhava Buddhist Center Internet Web Site:
<http://www.padmasambhava.org>

(Kalmika Diary from page 5)

Rinpoches performed a Shinto Empowerment. Afterwards, we went to a restaurant that was closed because they said they could only open up for 10 or more people--we were eight. The next day the Khenpos gave Refuge Vows to more than 100 people. It was a very special event and I was pleased to be able to re-affirm my own vows at this place. After lunch and a nap there were teachings on the Bardo. Khenchen Palden presented a more condensed version here due to time limitations, but for me it is a help to reinforce what was taught at the Bardo Retreat in Moscow.

Dumplings and bread were served for dinner at a Kalmik cafe. We then walked to a small house converted into a Gelukpa Temple, which had prayer wheels made from large food cans. As many monks arrive, I realize there are more monks present than lay people. Our Rinpoches arrive to greetings with smiles as *katags* are exchanged. Lama Tingley, His Holiness the Dalai Lama's representative for Russia, is present to conduct a large celebration in honor of His Holiness's birthday.



The Khenpos with Gelukpa Monks in Elista during a ceremony honoring the birthday of H. H. the Dalai Lama

Lama Tingley, not having expected such a large crowd, invites everyone for tea and refreshments prepared for the Khenpos and other monks. It turns out to be a feast! I sit next to Lama Tingley for a while; he is most gracious and friendly to talk with. The table was full of food and the room full of good spirits. There is much laughter and joking in the Tibetan language between the Khenpos and the other monks. What a real treat this unexpected night is. A cheerful goodnight is said to all. Back at the flat, I relax with my new Russian friends, and soon fall asleep.

I am realizing the amazing events that happen around the peace, love and compassion that the Khenpos bring with them in all that they do--wherever they go. Everyday brings more surprises, and I have a feeling the best is yet to come...

(Soldier's Story from page 3)

way to the Penitentiary I had the wonderful opportunity to meet an old teacher in a dark alley.

The lesson this woman imparted to me is a good place to start a discussion on the relationship between Buddhism and the profession of arms -- a subject given little discussion in the West. As one of the few commissioned officers in the US Armed Forces, not of an Asian ancestry, who openly avows the Buddhist faith, I have probably given the subject of Buddhism and war more consideration than most.

The relationship between Buddhism and the profession of arms began around the 4th century BCE. Before his enlightenment and monastic career as the Buddha, Prince Siddhartha was a practicing member of ancient India's warrior caste, the *Kshatriya*. The first Buddhist monarch and great warrior, Emperor Asoka, built a memorial stupa at the site of the training hall in which the Buddha drilled himself in the arts of warrior-ship. Although the monastic rules of the Vinaya prohibited monks from direct military service and prohibited monks from even observing military exercises, the historical Buddha was no stranger to the fields of battle.

Episodes of his life after his enlightenment suggest a ministry of affirmative activism toward the timeless reality of the human condition known as war. For instance, the Buddha stopped a great battle between his own clan--the Sakyas, and their adversaries--the Koliyans. Records document his

advice to the warrior, King Yoddhajiva, that death in battle is not a path to salvation. Records reveal a discussion between the Buddha and King Prasenadi of Kosala on the similarities of monastic and military discipline. He also displayed a warrior's fearlessness in order to convert the infamous bandit Angulimala away from a life of senseless aggression and atrocious violence.

As war becomes more of a campaign against economies and societies instead of battles between armies, the truth becomes obvious that today it is the unarmed civilian who has become the focus of sacrifice in military conflicts. That is the lesson the old dark woman in the alley taught the "armed and dangerous" warrior from the most powerful military on earth. It is time to start recognizing that the truly fearless participants in war are more likely to be unwilling and destitute noncombatants than martial volunteers. The Buddha counseled his followers to accept the world as it is while at the same time, using every means at our disposal, to relieve the suffering of others. We can also learn from the suffering of victims in war. We can learn that fearlessness is having "nothing" to lose.

Capt. Lawrence "Larry" P. Rockwood -- a member of PBC-Orlando, has been a student of the Khenpos for the past 6 years. Found guilty of "conduct unbecoming an officer and gentleman" at his court-martial, the charge recently was dismissed as part of an automatic appeals process.

REACH OUT AND TOUCH PBC

I have a great Affinity for "pbc" (phone bill contributions)! Initiated by PBC member Joe Scarpa, Affinity is a very successful long distance phone company fundraising program. Every time you make a long distance call you are effortlessly donating 8% to Padmasambhava Buddhist Center--it's that simple.

I switched from my previous long distance carrier two years ago to help raise money to build PBC's national retreat center; I have enjoyed great service ever since. Affinity guarantees 10% savings from your previous calling plan--hassle free. Won't you join us in long distance savings with a purpose? Collectively we can make a difference. If you are not sure about switching, ask some of these folks how they like the service:

Shantom Marans Josh Bailey Norman Matkin Joe Burke Milagros Ortiz Ashley Wiper Iris Flowers Janie Floren Edward Sierra Rory Branan Alice Shapiro John Brosius L.L. Moses Leila Joseph Mimi Bailey Jon & Nancy Ash Lorraine O'Rourke Reich Metal Fabricators The Cedar Fund Family Resource Center Kegel & Associates Re/Max Ideal Realty Current Production Group PBC-NY PBC-WPB Tara Evans JohnAnkele Matt Bailey Joe Scarpa MANY THANKS!

Please consider making the change now...it is easy: Call 1-800-670-0008; be ready to give this information: The Affinity Organization #311-086-000, and Representative # 301-007-980. For more info, contact our Sangha Rep., Joe Scarpa at 407/368.5853. May all beings benefit from this activity!

- Jonathan Ash, PBC-WPB



Pema Mandala

931 Village Blvd. Suite 905-390
West Palm Beach, Florida 33409-1939

Forward and Address Correction Requested

Newsletter of the
Padmasambhava Buddhist Centers
Spring 1996

(Sangha News from page 6)

re-decorating the center. It feels warm and comfortable, and looks fresh and new in a traditional Tibetan style. Thanks to all who worked so hard and donated their time and money towards the completion of this project.

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May all beings benefit from this auspicious Dharma activity.

(Homeless Project from page 4)

especially loved by our younger helpers, Pao-Ching Tung, and Maris and Ben Abelson, and their friends. The women really appreciate that the kids give up so much of their time.

We closed down operations for one month because of the exodus to India; services resumed on March 10. Donations are appreciated since the kitty can get pretty low. Clothes and bedding are also welcome. So are pairs of willing hands. Please send your donations to:

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

Marie Friquegnon lives in Manhattan and has been a student of the Khenpos since 1982. Her husband, Raziell Abelson, and their children, Maris and Ben Abelson, all help with the homeless project.

Please help us to keep our mailing list current. Notify us by mail as soon as possible if you have moved in the last year. Please print clearly. Thank you for your assistance.

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